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VANCOUVER • WEEKEND DECEMBER 12-14, 2008 metronews.ca

Local pg 2

Maiden sky trip for Peak 2 Peak

Woman faces 4 charges in tot's death

DRIVING A Delta woman is facing four criminal counts in the death of four-year-old Alexa Renee Middelaer, who was struck by a car while feeding a horse at the side of the road.

Carol Berner, 56, is charged with impaired and dangerous driving causing bodily harm and death in the May 17 accident that killed the toddler and injured her aunt and grandparents.

The family was parked on the side of the road in the 4300 block of 64th Street. Alexa and her aunt were feeding a horse through a fence when they were hit by a car. The vehicle also crashed into the family's parked car and then into a wooden pole.

In a news release, Alexa's parents said the incident should not be viewed as an accident, but rather as the "consequence of bad, deliberate and irresponsible choices."

"We have felt anger, intense grief and disappointment," the Middelaers wrote. "The loss of a child, at the height of her innocence and potential while feeding a horse is simply unacceptable."

Berner appears in court on Feb. 9.

JEFF HODSON/METRO VANCOUVER

COURTESY MIDDELAER FAMILY

Alexa Renee Middelaer is seen here in a family photo.

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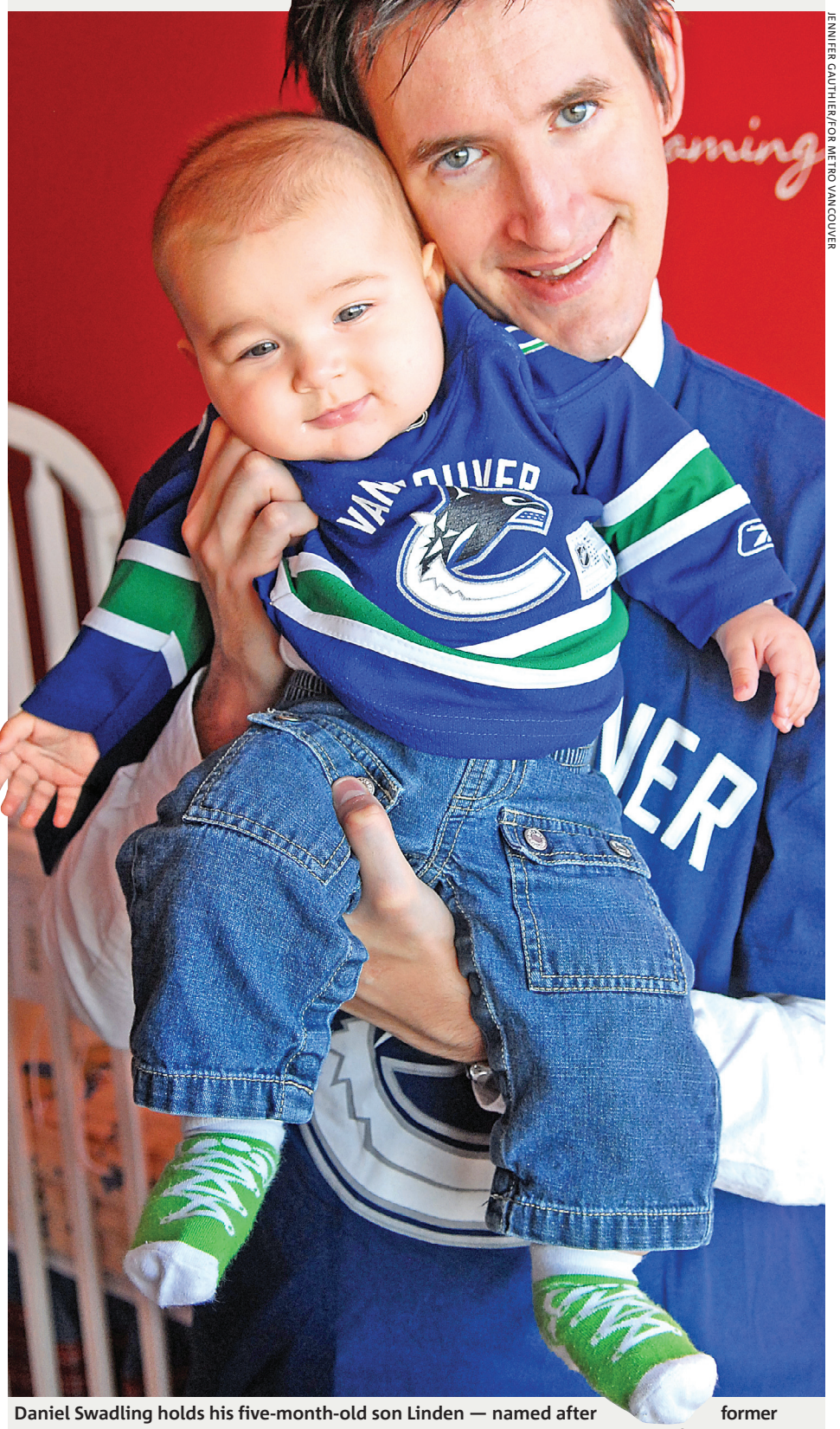
Please recycle

Linden, too **Fans**



JENNIFER GAUTHIER/FOR METRO VANCOUVER

Daniel Swadling holds his five-month-old son Linden — named after former Vancouver Canucks captain Trevor Linden — at their home Thursday. Daniel, his wife Norma and baby Linden are looking forward to being at GM Place this Wednesday, when the Canucks honour one of the most popular players in franchise history by retiring Linden's No. 16 jersey. Story, page 2

2010 tix for sale on web

KRISTEN THOMPSON
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VANCOUVER 2010 Games

Hundreds of Olympic tickets are now available online as lottery winners are selling tickets — including those for gold-medal hockey and opening and closing ceremonies — on the web.

Within hours of VANOC notifying recipients they'd won seats in the spectator lottery, people started reselling them on craigslist and EBay, some for more than $4,000 each.

Organizers are, however, warning would-be online purchasers that scalped tickets might be fraudulent.

While it's against the terms and conditions of purchasing 2010 tickets to resell them, scalping isn't against the law in British Columbia.

Yesterday, Vancouver-based ShowTimeTickets started offering to buy and sell Olympic tickets, even guaranteeing their validity.

Murray Pratt, vice-president of operations and business development at ShowTimeTickets, said he believes there's nothing wrong with what his company is doing.

"Maybe someone loses their job and they want to sell their tickets," he said. "Some people aren't comfortable making the decision (to buy) right now."

He added that he understand VANOC's concerns about fraud. "That's definitely a concern for us, too," Pratt said. "We want to part of a solution that helps consumers have a once-in-a-lifetime chance."

Official buys

- Any unsold tickets can be bought Friday starting at 9 a.m. on a first-come, first-serve basis, but only by people who ordered seats in the first round of sales.
- Paper tickets won't be delivered until late next year.

Transit expansion studies: $10M

ANNOUNCEMENT The province and TransLink will spend $10 million to study the expansion of rapid-transit lines west to the University of B.C. and east into Surrey, Transportation Minister Kevin Falcon announced.

The preliminary engineering work and public consultation will take place over the next 18 to 24 months. The studies will examine route, cost and technology options.

The extensions were previously announced in January as part of the province's $14-billion transportation plan. There is no timeline for either project, other than a vague pledge that they would be completed sometime before 2020.

Falcon said the Surrey extension would be a minimum of six kilometres and would bring service through Gilford to and "ultimately" to Fleetwood. The Vancouver extension to UBC would begin at Granville SkyTrain station.

Bruce Ralston, the New Democrat MLA for Surrey-Whalley, said the announcement was electioneering for May's provincial election.

JEFF HODSON/METRO VANCOUVER

Free Daily News Group Inc., operating as Metro Vancouver Newspapers 1190 Homer Street, Suite 250, Vancouver, B.C. V6B 2X6. Publisher: Maryse Lalonde

New bus lane on Highway 99
Construction began Thursday on a new shoulder bus lane on northbound Highway 99 between White Rock and Richmond. The bus lane is meant to reduce congestion on the busy highway and encourage more transit use. **NEWS1130.COM**

Local

Hockey sings for Bublé

Homegrown Juno and Grammy award-winning crooner Michael Bublé will soon be a minority owner in the Vancouver Giants hockey team. Bublé made the announcement in here Thursday with majority owner and friend Ron Toigo. METRO VANCOUVER

Resto review lists wrong venue

CORRECTION Metro sincerely apologizes and deeply regrets that the wrong restaurant name was published in a review Thursday. The Refinery, located at 1117 Granville St., was not the restaurant reviewed.

The Refinery, which was designed by M Studio (Earl's Paramount, Hapa Izakaya), is a market-style eatery with an emphasis on fresh foods. It specializes in breads, charcuterie, cheese, antipasti, cured seafood and other old-world delights that can be paired with a selection of wine and B.C. beers. It aims to maintain mostly local, high-quality ingredients whenever possible.

For more information on The Refinery please visit therefineryvancouver.com or call 604-687-8001 for reservations.

METRO VANCOUVER

metronews.ca
What's online Friday.

Read Bank of Canada issues grim economic report at **metronews.ca/canada.**
Read Montrealers loot contents of failed restaurant left on sidewalk at **metronews.ca/canada.**
Read Guest list for Obama inauguration gala revealed at **metronews.ca/world.**
Read Harper to appoint reform-minded senators before Christmas at **metronews.ca/canada.**

Please recycle

Linden gets namesake and No. 16 retired

ANDREA WOO
for Metro Vancouver

When it came to naming their baby, longtime Canucks fan Daniel Swadling says that it was an easy decision for him and his wife Norma.

"I made a list of what names I wanted and Linden was at the top of my list," said the video game programmer, whose choice was naturally a tip of the hat to recently retired player Trevor Linden. "She was trying to guess what was on my list and said, 'Linden?' At that moment, we knew that Linden was the right name."

On Wednesday, the Vancouver Canucks will retire Linden's jersey in a ceremony before their home game against the Edmonton Oilers. Daniel, Norma and baby Linden — now almost six months old — will be in attendance as the Canucks' No. 16 jersey is hung up for good.

> **"I made a list of what names I wanted and Linden was at the top of my list."**
> Daniel Swadling

Swadling said his family's affinity for the man dubbed Captain Canuck extends beyond his on-ice skills, calling him a role model within the community. Linden has contributed to various charities through his Trevor Linden Foundation, for example, with many of his efforts going toward B.C. Children's Hospital.

"Also, the name Linden is very good for a boy," added Swadling. "If his name was, I don't know, Sergio Momesso, we wouldn't call our kid Momesso."

Linden made his NHL debut in 1988, when the Canucks selected the then 18-year-old second overall in the entry draft. At 21, he became the Canucks captain — one of the youngest captains in the NHL — and two years later led the team within one game of winning the Stanley Cup.

He has also played for the Washington Capitals, Montreal Canadiens and New York Islanders.

He will be the second Canuck to have his jersey retired after former captain Stan Smyl.

ANDY CLARK/REUTERS

The Peak 2 Peak gondola passes between Whistler and Blackcomb mountains in Whistler on Thursday. At 3,024 metres, the Peak 2 Peak has four support towers and is the world's longest unsupported span.

Peak 2 Peak gondola ride to take it's maiden voyage

KRISTEN THOMPSON
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GONDOLA The long-awaited opening of Whistler's Peak 2 Peak gondola comes to fruition Friday with a daylong celebration on Whistler and Blackcomb mountains and in The Village.

The first gondola rides, connecting the peak of Whistler Mountain to the peak of Blackcomb Mountain, begin at 11 a.m.

Après celebrations start at 3 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

The gondola travels at 7.5 metres per second, covering about 4.5 kilometres and taking roughly 11 minutes.

Each gondola holds 22 people seated and six standing.

A live webcast of the 10:30 a.m. official opening ceremony is available at whistlerblackcomb.com/webcast.

ShareYourViews
vancouverletters@metronews.ca

Test the ice at the Richmond Oval

2010 You don't have to be an athlete to try out one of the newest 2010 venues Friday.

The Richmond Oval, home to Olympic long track speed skating events, is offering the public a chance to test-skate the ice.

Construction of the venue officially finishes Friday and to celebrate the milestone it will be open from 4:30 p.m. onward for live entertainment, building tours and public skating sessions on the 400-metre-long track.

METRO VANCOUVER

News in brief

CHARGES A 57-year-old at-home ESL tutor in Vancouver has been charged with a sex crime after a 16-year-old boy complained about being touched inappropriately, police said. The male tutor will appear in court Dec. 15.

BUST Nine suspects have been arrested after a major drug bust organized by Delta Police with help from officers in Surrey and Vancouver, news1130.com reports. Twenty-six drug, weapon and conspiracy charges have been laid. METRO NEWS SERVICES

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B.C. to match donations for earthquake victims

The province is matching $273,300 in donations raised at the B.C. Canada Pavilion in Beijing for victims of the May earthquake in China, Premier Gordon Campbell announced. METRO VANCOUVER

Film follows soldier's recovery

JEFF HODSON
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JEFF HODSON/METRO VANCOUVER

Debbie Lepore and Trevor Greene outside their hotel in Vancouver on Thursday.

The past 2½ years have been a "marathon of baby steps" for a Vancouver army reservist whose brain was split by an axe in a horrific attack in Afghanistan.

Capt. Trevor Greene said he's never been a patient man and the agonizing slowness of his progress has been the most difficult part of his recovery.

"It's like being frozen in an iceberg and slowly thawing out," said Greene, who is originally from Cape Breton, at a hotel in Vancouver yesterday.

In March 2006, Greene, a journalist and author, was a co-operation officer in a platoon of Canadian soldiers operating near Kandahar.

During a meeting with village elders, a youth ran up behind Greene and plunged an axe deep into his skull. Greene had taken off his helmet and the axe cleaved his brain in half.

Greene's recovery is the subject of a documentary, Peace Warrior, which airs Saturday night (and repeats Sunday) on CTV.

The documentary, by North Vancouver's Sue Ridout, follows Greene, his fiancée Debbie Lepore and their three-year-old daughter Grace for 18 months as the family moves from an extended care facility in B.C. to a brain injury centre in Alberta and finally to their new home in Nanaimo.

The pair plan to marry in July 2010.

Showtime

- Peace Warrior airs Saturday at 7 p.m. on CTV.

"It'll be three years in March and we're looking good," said Lepore, who gave up her career as a chartered accountant to care for her fiancé.

"I'm very, very happy with what he has accomplished so far."

Greene, who is alert and has limited movement, said his goal is to walk and one-day hopes to accompany his daughter down the aisle at her wedding.

Two facing charges after emaciated horse collapses

LANGLEY Two Langley residents have been arrested for animal cruelty after an emaciated horse being used to pull a vehicle out of a ditch collapsed and had to be put down.

Five other horses, in equally poor condition, were found on the property and seized by the SPCA.

Eileen Drever, SPCA senior animal protection officer, said police and firefighters arrived at the property to find the seven-year-old gelding being forced to pull a sedan out of a ditch.

Drever said the exhausted horse was likely in the ditch for several hours and was unable to stand. After he was lifted out of the ditch with a tow truck he was euthanized.

"I can't call the horse in the ditch a walking skeleton because by the time we reached him, he was too weak to walk," said Drever. "It was terribly upsetting for all the investigators involved."

Five other horses on the owners' property were surrendered to the SPCA and are being treated in Surrey. Drever said their prognosis is "hopeful."

The SPCA will be recommending charges of animal cruelty against the owners, a 53-year-old man and 48-year-old woman.

KRISTEN THOMPSON/ METRO VANCOUVER

SPCA figures

- Last year, the B.C. SPCA spent more than $1.8 million investigating 4,600 complaints, caring for animals in distress and preparing charges for Crown counsel.

News in brief

TASER B.C.'s Criminal Justice Branch was expected to say Friday if any of the RCMP officers involved in Robert Dziekanski's Taser death at YVR will be charged, news1130.com reported.

DRUGS At least 10 people in the Lower Mainland and on Vancouver Island have had serious reactions to contaminated cocaine, the Ministry of Health said. The patients suffered from bone-marrow and immune-system suppression. METRO NEWS SERVICE

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Supreme Court denies Schreiber

The Supreme Court has ruled, in a decision without comment, that it would not review Karlheinz Schreiber's latest bid to block his extradition from Canada. Schreiber will not be extradited until he has participated in a public inquiry regarding his dealings with Brian Mulroney. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Canada

Christmas tree or holiday tree?

The first test for Quebec Premier Jean Charest came just days after winning Monday's election — what to call the tree erected on the lawn of the legislature. A Tuesday news release announced the premier would "light the Christmas tree" the next day, but was corrected to "holiday tree" within minutes. The province later said the second release was sent in error and that the tree is, in fact, a Christmas tree. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Ottawa broke law on EI, Supreme Court finds

Rules fees were unlawfully turned into 'payroll tax' for years

The federal government collected employment insurance premiums "unlawfully" for three years, the Supreme Court of Canada said in a decision that raises questions about what will happen to the money paid into government coffers by employers and employees during that time.

> **"Canadian employers and employees can be confident that any future revenues raised from EI premiums will go exclusively towards paying benefits."**
> Human Resources and Skills Development Canada

In a 7-0 judgment, the court rejected arguments by two Quebec unions that the former Liberal government under then-prime ministers Jean Chrétien and Paul Martin had deliberately racked up huge employment insurance surpluses and then diverted them to help balance the federal budget.

But the court found that EI premiums in 2002, 2003 and 2005 had been collected "unlawfully, without the necessary legislative authorization" from Parliament. That's because the federal cabinet was given the discretion to set the rates, without the criteria that had previously been used to guide those decisions.

Employment insurance was effectively transformed from a regulatory scheme into "a payroll tax," Justice Louise LeBel wrote for the unanimous court. Invoking "the ancient, but fundamental, principle of our democratic system that there should be no taxation without representation," he said it was not clear that Parliament had intended to delegate its taxing authority, making the collection of EI premiums in those years illegal.

The court also affirmed the federal government's authority to take an "active role" by offering job programs within the employment insurance system.

The effect of the ruling is unclear. The court suspended the legal effects of its judgment for 12 months. But it did not order that any of the money be repaid, as the unions had asked, and did not tell the government how to remedy the situation.

"We are analyzing the decision related to the means by which the EI premium rate was set for 2002, 2003 and 2005 and its implications to develop a solution that respects the Supreme Court decision," said a statement from Human Resources and Skills Development Canada.

"Canadian employers and employees can be confident that any future revenues raised from EI premiums will go exclusively towards paying benefits and reducing EI premiums," the statement added.

As of March 31, 2007, the EI surplus was $54.1 billion.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Airports infiltrated by crime groups: RCMP

REPORT There are 38 organized crime groups with members or associates working at Pearson International Airport in Toronto, according to an RCMP study of smuggling at Canadian airports.

The groups smuggle humans, cocaine, marijuana and a stimulant called "khat" that predates the use of coffee, but is relatively new on Canadian streets, according to the RCMP study, called Project Spawn. The study examined criminal cases between January 2005 and August 2007 in the airports of Toronto, Vancouver, Edmonton, Calgary, Winnipeg, Ottawa, Montreal and Halifax.

"The facilities are susceptible to criminal exploitation and infiltration, particularly at the major international airports that receive frequent flights from either source countries or transit countries for various types of contraband," the report states.

1,326

The number of people working in Canadian airports that are believed to have links to organized crime groups.

Baggage handlers, ramp attendants, food caterers and refuellers were among the groups that included organized crime members or associates, the report said. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Opposition pans Harper's Senate plan

POLITICS Constitutional experts and opposition parties have condemned Prime Minister Stephen Harper's plan to fill every empty Senate seat in advance of his government's possible defeat in the new year.

Constitutional scholar Desmond Morton called the move a scandal in view of the precarious position of Harper's minority government.

"He has the power to do it, but he shouldn't have the gall," said Morton, a professor emeritus at McGill University.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Ottawa **Transit strike snarls traffic**

TIM WIECLAWSKI/METRO CANADA

A sticker expressing public frustration was put on a poster in front of the Elgin Street entrance to the city hall parking garage, where striking OC Transpo employees slowed traffic Thursday. Transit workers began their strike early Wednesday.

News in brief

ELEPHANTS Zoo elephants are living truncated lives, as little as one-third the lifespan of pachyderms in protected preserves, says a new study published in the journal Science. The study was co-authored by a top University of Guelph veterinarian in Ontario.

DEPORTED Steven Andrews Hayes, 49, a U.S. fugitive sex offender has been ordered deported from Canada, after he was discovered working under an alias on a Calgary construction site. Hayes is wanted in Texas on charges of aggravated sexual assault of a child, CBC News Online reports. He was profiled on America's Most Wanted and had been on the run since 2005. Calgary police arrested him Tuesday after a tip from U.S. marshals.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

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New drug might help shrink breast tumours

The Novartis bone-strengthening drug Zometa may enhance the effects of chemotherapy, shrink breast tumours and help more women avoid a mastectomy, British researchers said. **REUTERS**

World

Obama eyeing climate deal

The U.S. Senate will let president-elect Barack Obama, left, sign a UN pact to fight global warming in late 2009 even if U.S. climate laws are not yet in place, U.S. Senator John Kerry predicted yesterday. But Kerry, designated head of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said on the sidelines of UN climate talks in Poland that China, India and Russia would also have to promise to cut greenhouse-gas emissions to win Senate blessing of any pact. REUTERS

Suicide bomber kills 50 in Iraq

Crowded restaurant in disputed city of Kirkuk site of latest violence

A suicide bomber killed about 50 people and wounded more than 100 Thursday, including Kurdish and Arab officials, in a crowded restaurant near Iraq's ethnically mixed city of Kirkuk.

The bomber detonated explosives inside the restaurant, shattering the calm of a major Muslim holiday, and killing at least one official from Iraqi President Jalal Talabani's Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, who was eating there with other politicians after a meeting to discuss Kurdish-Arab tensions.

Police said the restaurant north of Kirkuk, a city disputed by ethnic Kurds, Arabs and Turkmen, was packed during lunch hour. The cavernous restaurant's floor was left littered with broken glass and spotted with blood, and plates of food and soda cans were abandoned on tables.

Brig.-Gen. Sarhat Qader, a local police official, put the toll at 50 dead and 109 wounded. A U.S. military statement said 45 were killed and 93 wounded.

It appeared to be the worst attack in Iraq since 63 people were killed by a truck bomb in Baghdad June 17.

Violence has dropped sharply in recent months after more than five years of sectarian bloodshed and insurgency unleashed by the 2003 U.S.-led invasion. Iraqis have begun to venture out and resume normal life in areas where security is returning, but militants still stage regular attacks in volatile areas. Kirkuk has been one of the less violent cities.

Suicide bombings are generally attributed to Sunni Islamist al-Qaida.

The blast, in a well-known restaurant frequented by Kirkuk dignitaries, shook Iraq as Muslims celebrated Eid al-Adha, a four-day religious holiday. **REUTERS**

U.S. troops

- Iraq will need a U.S. troop presence to help build up its military forces past the newly agreed to three-year deadline for the withdrawal of American soldiers, a senior Iraqi official said.

AKOO RASHEED/REUTERS

Iraqi policemen rush a child wounded in a bomb attack Thursday into a hospital in Kirkuk, 250 kilometres north of Baghdad. A suicide bomber killed about 50 people and injured more than 100 yesterday in a crowded restaurant near Iraq's ethnically mixed city of Kirkuk, police said.

U.S. teen marijuana use stalls

STUDY Recent declines in marijuana use by U.S. teens appear to have stalled this year and their abuse of prescription drugs remains at worrisome levels, researchers said.

The annual survey of U.S. teen drug use, conducted by University of Michigan researchers for the U.S. government, also found continuing declines in cigarette smoking and alcohol use.

Marijuana is the most commonly used of the illicit drugs and its use had been in a slow but steady decrease this decade, but that appeared to halt this year, researchers said.

The survey found that marijuana use by students in two of the three grades measured increased slightly. But the annual survey has shown an overall downward trend in teen drug use this decade, and President George W. Bush cited progress on the issue during his presidency.

The survey showed a persistent worrisome rate of abuse of prescription medications, including the powerful painkillers Vicodin and Oxycontin, with little change in the past six years. **REUTERS**

EU close to climate, stimulus plan

ENVIRONMENT European leaders moved towards agreement on a multibillion-dollar program to tackle economic recession and a climate change plan amended to limit impact on struggling industries.

Green groups warned that the European Union's credibility as a force in tackling climate change would be endangered if it accepted too many changes to a plan to cut carbon-dioxide emissions by 20 per cent by 2020.

One British group said compromises in EU climate policy, which will be key to world talks next year to produce a successor to the Kyoto pact on climate change, amounted to a "meltdown."

Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, who has threatened to veto a deal without concessions to protect key industries, declared: "We are heading towards a compromise." **REUTERS**

Auto industry bailout falls apart in Senate

ECONOMY The U.S. Senate failed Thursday night to reach a last-ditch compromise to bail out automakers, effectively killing any chance of congressional action this year.

The $14-billion US legislation officially died in the Senate yesterday after supporters failed to get enough support in a procedural vote.

Republican-brokered talks faltered, leaving the chamber at a dead end on an approach for extending $14 billion in loans to avert a threatened collapse of one or more automakers, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid said in remarks on the floor.

House bill

- The House passed its version of a Democratic-sponsored bailout Wednesday but Senate Republicans rejected that measure.

The White House said it would evaluate its options in light of the collapse of the bailout legislation.

White House spokesman Tony Fratto declined to say what those options included. The Bush administration has resisted Democrats' past demands to use some money from the $700-billion bailout package approved in October to help struggling financial institutions to help the automakers.

Fratto said the failed legislation had "presented the best chance to avoid a disorderly bankruptcy while ensuring taxpayer funds only go to firms whose stakeholders were prepared to make difficult decisions to become viable."

Participants said the compromise fell apart over proposed wage concessions by the United Auto Workers. **REUTERS**

NO TERM CONTRACT NECESSARY

the new fido

Obama puts Daschle at head of healthcare reform
U.S. president-elect Barack Obama has chosen former Sen. Tom Daschle to spearhead health-care reform, putting a Washington veteran in charge of one of the most ambitious gambles of his administration. Many in the U.S. cannot afford basic care and 15 per cent of the country — about 46 million people — are uninsured. REUTERS

4,000 Greek students march in protest

VIOLENCE Protesters hurled fire bombs at riot police, who answered with tear-gas, as 4,000 Greek students marched Thursday in a sixth straight day of anti-government violence.

Riots across Greece, triggered by the police shooting of a teenager but fuelled by deep popular anger over corruption and economic hardship, have shaken the conservative government.

"Down with the government of murderers," read demonstrators' banners. Marchers chanted "Cops, Pigs, Murderers!" in the latest spasm of Greece's worst unrest since the aftermath of its 1967-74 military rule.

Helicopters hovered overhead as the protesters set fire to piles of garbage in the middle of deserted Athens avenues.

The violence was less intense then in previous days, but more protests were planned for Friday and Monday and some Greeks asked how much longer the government could remain in power.

"The government has shown it cannot handle this. If police start imposing the law, everyone will say the military junta is back," said Yannis Kalaitzakis, 49, an electrician.

"The government is stuck between a rock and a hard place."

Earlier in the day, gangs of Greek high school students hurled stones and fire bombs at police stations in Athens suburbs. REUTERS

Venezuela indicts leader of opposition

CHARGES Venezuela indicted opposition leader Manuel Rosales on corruption charges Thursday, possibly weakening adversaries of leftist President Hugo Chavez as he seeks to deepen his self-styled revolution.

The indictment, which had been expected, came after the government this year blocked several opposition politicians from running for office, sparking criticism that Chavez was using the state to silence his political enemies.

"The only thing missing is for them to investigate me for the assassination of John Fitzgerald Kennedy." Manuel Rosales

The indictment opens the possibility that Rosales could be unable to run for president in the 2012 election. Chavez is opening a campaign for a constitutional amendment allowing him to stay in office after his current term ends.

"Today we've come to confront this political lynching that they are trying to do, a terrorist trial, a political trial," said Rosales, a former presidential candidate and mayor of Maracaibo. "The only thing missing is for them to investigate me for the assassination of John Fitzgerald Kennedy."

The state prosecutor's office said the charges of "illicit enrichment," punishable by three to 10 years in prison, were based on a government investigation of Rosales' assets in which he was unable to explain the origin of certain funds.

Chavez is seeking a referendum for early next year on changing the constitution to lift a two-term limit on presidential re-election. REUTERS

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News in brief

CARACAS A power outage struck parts of the Venezuelan capital yesterday, the latest in a series of major blackouts. The outage hit during rush hour in the metropolitan area of about five million people. Experts say Venezuela has skimped on billions of dollars in electrical investments, leaving power generation 20 per cent below the level needed for a stable grid.

ITALY American exchange student Amanda Knox, perhaps the most famous murder suspect in Italy, is featured in a prison movie reciting the famous "To be, or not to be" speech from Shakespeare's Hamlet, the director said. The movie — which has yet to be publicly screened — features 12 female inmates including the 21-year-old Knox, who has been held in jail for more than a year over the murder of her flat-mate Meredith Kercher in the town of Perugia. REUTERS

Brazil unveils $3.6 billion in tax breaks

BRASILIA Brazil's government has announced tax breaks worth 8.4 billion reais ($3.6 billion US) designed to boost demand and stem a slowing economy, but which could undermine its fiscal strength.

The government will cut industrial taxes on cars and reduce financial taxes on consumer loans to help an ailing automobile industry and bolster once-buoyant consumer demand, economic authorities told a news conference in Brasilia.

It will cut income taxes by as much as 54 per cent on lower and middle salary brackets.

Also, the central bank will use international reserves to extend loans to Brazilian companies with foreign debt maturing in 2009.

Total loans could exceed $10 billion.

The measure is designed to ease a liquidity crunch on the currency market, which has made it difficult for companies to service their overseas loans.

Industry leaders applauded the moves, but critics said the measures could signal a deterioration of the government's fiscal position.

"I think it's very bad because you'll increase fiscal vulnerability ... at a time when revenue is falling and the government will increase a lot of expenditures in coming years," said Roberto Padovani, of West LB bank.

Brazil's booming economy is showing signs of slowing. Car sales plunged in October and November, industrial output is contracting, and some companies like mining giant Vale have begun to lay off workers and scale back investment plans. REUTERS

High interest

- Brazil has some of the world's highest interest rates, exceeding 50 per cent per year on some consumer loans.

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Comment & Views

Comment

Tiring of the spectacle?

OmniVision

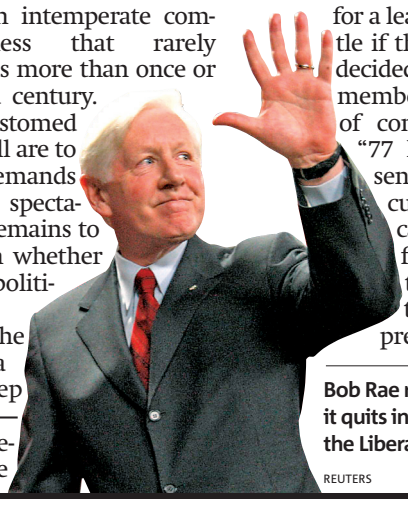
We can only imagine what was said to Bob Rae in the 24-hour period between last Monday and Tuesday to convince him to concede the fight for leader of the Liberal Party of Canada to his old college roommate Michael Ignatieff. Whatever it was, it must have been a compelling enough argument — or attractive enough offer — to breach Rae's apparently adamant opposition and forthright ego.

When the week began, Rae was insisting that "most people believe it's better to have a contest, it's better to have a choice." A day later, he was all resignation and curt practicality: "It's not the end of the world here, folks," he told the Toronto Star. "I mean, a decision had to be made."

"You have to be realistic about these things," he said, with the verbal equivalent of a wince. "It's just politics."

Politics is what we're seeing a lot of this season, as the howling rhetoric and convulsions of two election campaigns on either side of the border seems to have infused the customary torpor of Canadian Parliament with an intemperate combativeness that rarely emerges more than once or twice a century.

Unaccustomed as we all are to the demands of this spectacle, it remains to be seen whether our politicians have the stamina to keep going — or whether the Canadian people have the patience to pay attention.



Bob Rae recently called it quits in his bid for the Liberal leadership.

REUTERS

Call it what you want — and I like to call it a coup within an attempted coup — but it's hard to deny that the surprisingly brisk leadership shuffle the Liberals have undertaken this week is an acknowledgement that their assault on Stephen Harper's minority government might not be powered by fully charged batteries. Even after stepping aside for Ignatieff, Rae insisted that he would still have been up for a leadership battle if the party had decided to go to its members, instead of consulting the "77 MPs and 58 senators of caucus, defeated candidates from the October election and the presidents of riding associations and commission clubs" the Star called the "Liberal elite."

Consulting the party's own bylaws, choosing alternative delegates from electoral district associations requires a candidate "(i) is a youth, if there are not six youth delegates from that EDA; (ii) is an aboriginal person, if there are not two aboriginal delegates from that EDA; (iii) is a woman, if there are not 10 delegates from that EDA who are women; (iv) is a man, if there are not ten delegates from that EDA who are men; (v) is a senior, if there are not two delegates from that EDA who are seniors." You almost can't blame them for defaulting to the backroom everyone thinks runs the Liberal party.

Rae's right; whatever this is — and it's certainly nothing like democracy, perish the thought — it's just politics, God help us all.

Rick McGinnis writes about music, movies, books and television, but not opera.

MICHAEL DE ADDER

Views

Super Dave lives to fight for B.C. again

UrbanCompass

If you want your economy to survive a recession, what do you do?

Well, if you're Premier Gordon Campbell, you hire David Emerson, the ultimate survivor, to run your special economic council on surviving the recession.

Emerson was apparently born with more lives than Felix, but his most breathtaking act of survival came in 2006 when he managed to stay in the cabinet even though his Liberal government was defeated. Of course, this time it was a Conservative cabinet, but Dave didn't even notice. He even kept his old portfolio, with a slight name adjustment: Minister in Charge of B.C.'s Economy.

During the campaign he ran as a Liberal and vowed to become Stephen Harper's "worst nightmare." Then, miraculously, as all the other Liberals picked up their stuff and headed over to the Loser side of the Commons, Emerson turned up at the Conservative cabinet swearing in ceremony!

There are still "Impeach David Emerson" signs stuck in lawns across his former Vancouver Kingsway riding, but Emerson simply opted not to face the music and retired from federal politics before the Oct. 14 election.

Now, eight weeks later, Dave is back in charge of saving the B.C. economy, this time for Victoria. Oh yeah, he's also the new head of the B.C. Transmission Corp., which runs B.C.'s electrical transmission system. Talk about a power position. Comes with a nice salary, too. As chairman and CEO, Emerson replaces two people: Chair Bob Reid and CEO Jane Peverett, who made $58,000 and $436,000 respectively. Surely, I can be forgiven for thinking he'll get the combined salary. After all, he's doing both jobs, right?

I'm not sure yet what he'll make for saving B.C.'s economy, but I'm sure a grateful province will open the treasury in appreciation.

I'm also not sure how Emerson has entranced the leaders of our nation. As CEO, he helped build Canfor into the largest producer of softwood lumber in Canada. Of course, Canfor just posted a net loss of $94.2 million, but you can't blame Emerson for that, can you? He left in 2004 to go into, um, federal politics.

Did I mention Emerson's other recent appointments? He's now on the board of Finning, the Caterpillar reseller that has made out like a bandit equipping the oil sands. And, finally, he joined the eminent law firm of Farris, Vaughan, etc. as a senior adviser.

Most of us will have a hard enough time hanging on to one job during the recession, but Super Dave has at least four. No wonder the premier is dazzled.

Paul Sullivan is a Vancouver-based journalist, owner of Sullivan Media consulting and editor-in-chief of Orato.com, the citizen news website.

Letters

Coalitions nothing new nor undemocratic

I am quite appalled by the cries against the opposition parties' plan to form a coalition government as undemocratic.

We do not vote for a leader we vote for MPs. In a majority the party with the majority of MPs voted in gets to run the country. However, in a minority the party with the most MPs elected gets first shot at proving to the rest of the House of Commons they are best suited to lead the country. If the minority government fails and receives a non-confidence vote, the opposition gets a chance. This is nothing new, as countries around the world have governments formed by a coalition of the opposition parties.

TYSON OATWAY, EDMONTON

Deeply opposed to columnist's statements

RE: View — "How the coalition propelled Harper in polls" by Ezra Levant (Dec 9)

"Polls showing that Canadians deeply oppose the coalition …" "Harper has skyrocketed to his highest level of supporters yet …" Wait a second, have I missed something? I remember Canada was deeply divided about the coalition. And by my understanding, Harper was not too popular in the Maritimes, Quebec and Ontario last week.

I am saddened to find such a right-wing column in my Metro (Mr. Levant is a Conservative party activist) and I find it only has a place in the paper if the paper offers the same space to a different view.

MELANY GAUVIN, OTTAWA

Measure twice, cut once

RE: Comment — "Let's retire the Queen" by Paul Sullivan (Dec 10)

Why is it bad to have one more step before a final decision? "Measure twice, cut once" as say Canadians. What a mess we'd have with this fast-made coalition if not for the intervention of the Governor General.

Now we have a cooling period for Harper to think twice on how to behave in a minority, and for the Opposition to choose the new stronger leader.

BORIS FOURSENKO, RICHMOND HILL, ONT

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You can't buy irony
Visa Inc. chief executive Joseph Saunders was without his own plastic when he lost his wallet en route to a New York conference from San Francisco yesterday. "It's rather embarrassing when someone steals my credit cards," he said. REUTERS

Business

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	US$	$1.2337		

EDITOR: FERMIN DESOUZA, FERMIN.DESOUZA@METRONEWS.CA

Oil firms cut 2009 spending

Companies still plan for market upswing, just in case

EnCana Corp. and Petro-Canada moved to cut 2009 capital spending yesterday to cope with falling commodity prices and market turmoil, but they left themselves enough room to change plans quickly in case the economy improves, or worsens.

After years of boosting budgets to increase production from far-flung reserves and the expensive oilsands, Canada's big oil companies are retrenching to cope with crude prices that have fallen by close to $100 US a barrel from July peaks.

Instead of looking to expand output at any cost, the producers are now taking a more cautious approach, waiting to see which way the economic winds will blow.

"The business environment is too volatile to count on with any degree of certainty. We will stay as flexible as possible until the situation becomes a little clearer for both the commodity and financial markets."
Ron Brenneman, Petro-Canada CEO

"The business environment is too volatile to count on with any degree of certainty," Petro-Canada chief executive Ron Brenneman said on a conference call. Brenneman said his company "will stay as flexible as possible until the situation becomes a little clearer for both the commodity and financial markets."

Petro-Canada said it will cut its 2009 capital budget by 36 per cent, to $3.96 billion, from the $6.16 billion it plans to spend this year.

The company is forecasting a drop in output as it plans major maintenance shutdowns at offshore projects in Atlantic Canada and in the North Sea.

Petro-Canada estimates 2009 production will range between 360,000 and 395,000 barrels of oil equivalent per day, down from its 2008 target of 400,000 to 420,000 boe/d, as the shutdowns are expected to cut average production by 15,000 boe/d next year.

EnCana said 2009 capital spending may shift up or down by $500 million depending on whether the North American recession tightens or eases over the course of the year.

It said it sees 2009 production levels remaining similar to 2008's, in the range of about 4.5 billion to 4.7 billion cubic feet of natural gas equivalent a day.

It also lowered its 2008 target for cash flow by about five per cent. It now expects cash flow for the year to range between $9.4 billion and $9.6 billion because of lower commodity prices and refining margins. REUTERS

Pawning Growth in a recession?

REUTERS/SUE ZEIDLER

Jordan Tabach-Bank, CEO of Beverly Loan Company, displays some of the valuables his client have traded in for cash in his upscale Beverly Hills, Calif., pawn shop yesterday. Pawn shop owners are seeing strong business across the U.S., even in such unexpected locales as Beverly Hills, the mecca of luxurious living and shopping.

Bimbo's bold, risky move

ACQUISITION Bimbo's latest U.S. foray is being praised as a bold move to grow in a competitive market, but a tough economic climate could make it hard for the Mexican breadmaker to shoulder the $2.3 billion US in debt that will fund the deal.

Bimbo should have no problem raising the debt to buy the U.S. breadmaking unit of Canada's George Weston Ltd., analysts said, but high interest payments and a risk of widening spreads could be a burden.

"Despite the fact the deal looks attractive in terms of doubling its share in the U.S. market … we think (debt) maturities the company will face are not optimal given the economic recession and tight credit," said analyst Marisol Huerta with Actinver brokerage. REUTERS

Business in brief

ZURICH The U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission filed a lawsuit against Swiss insurer Zurich Financial Services Group AG yesterday alleging the company in years past used several reinsurance contracts to illegally alter financial information, according to a lawsuit filed in U.S. District Court. They want Zurich to return illgotten gains made and pay penalties. The allegations date as far back as 1999 when the contracts were first developed by a Zurich reinsurance unit that was later spun off, using finite reinsurance, a controversial contract used by some in the industry to burnish financial results. REUTERS

Stocks, dollar drop after auto bailout collapse

MARKETS Asian stocks fell sharply Friday after failure to find a compromise on a $14 billion carmaker bailout in the U.S. Senate put the industry in jeopardy, pushing up U.S. government debt and dragging down the dollar.

U.S. stock futures gapped lower and oil prices extended losses to trade below $46 a barrel after the majority leader of the U.S. Senate said a procedural vote over the bailout would be held later, but predicted it would not pass.

Asian shares had already been under pressure before the auto industry news because of unease about the shrinking financial sector and economic malaise, which doused the bargain hunting that had helped to drive up shares in the last week.

"It shouldn't come as a surprise that Asian equity markets are selling off today on news of the U.S. auto bailout failure," said Tim Rocks, equity strategist with Macquarie Securities in Hong Kong. REUTERS

By the numbers

- The Dow Jones industrial average was up 5.58 points, or 0.06 per cent, to 8,767.00 around midday in New York.
- The Standard & Poor's 500 Index was 0.33 points higher at 899.57.
- The Nasdaq Composite Index slipped 2.63 points, or 0.17 per cent, to 1,559.59.

ACE soar on restructure news

RESTRUCTURE ACE Aviation Holdings Inc. shares more than doubled yesterday, a day after the company said it would wind up operations and distribute its Air Canada stock and other assets to shareholders.

Shares in ACE jumped as as much as $3.70, or 112 per cent, to $7 on the Toronto Stock Exchange, before closing at $6.57.

ACE said late Wednesday it would end the holding company structure it set up in 2004 as part of Air Canada's bankruptcy protection proceedings.

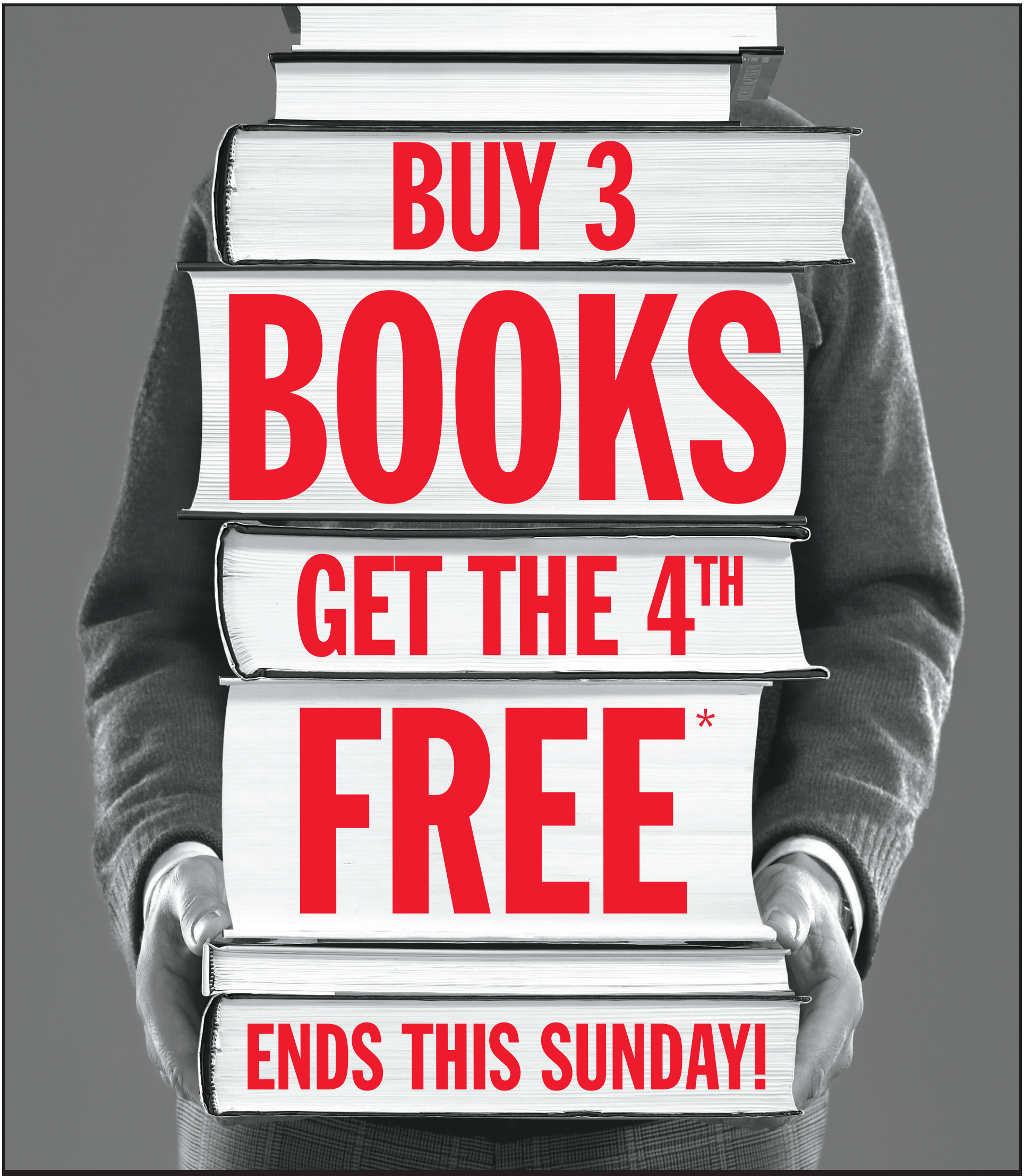
Air Canada stock tumbled 43 cents, or 24 per cent, to $1.27. REUTERS

U.S. jobless rate surges

ECONOMY The number of U.S. workers filing new claims for jobless benefits surged to a 26-year high last week as employers tightened their belts to help weather what many fear will be a deep, long recession.

Other reports showed the U.S. trade deficit swelled unexpectedly in October as weak global economies imported less from the United States.

Initial claims for state unemployment insurance benefits jumped by 58,000 to 573,000, the U.S. Labor Department said. REUTERS



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A holiday bright spot for retailers

Nintendo Co. Ltd. sold over 2 million Wii video game consoles in the United States in November, setting a record for console unit sales in a non-December month, the company said yesterday. Nintendo's president called the performance "stellar." REUTERS

$34.8B BCE deal dead

The $34.8 billion leveraged buyout of BCE Inc. ended in collapse yesterday, setting the stage for a fight between the company and its buyers over the deal's $1.2 billion breakup fee.

The derailment was widely expected after BCE said last month that its accountants, KPMG, had concluded that the company that would emerge from the buyout would fail a solvency test because of its huge debt load.

"It is most unfortunate that BCE is threatening litigation over the failure of a mutual closing condition."
Would-be BCE buyers group

The purchase required a positive solvency ruling from KPMG as a condition for closing, which was slated for yesterday. KPMG did not deliver a positive opinion, leading the deal to fail.

BCE confirmed the buyout would not proceed and said it would demand a $1.2-billion breakup fee from the buyers, a group of private-equity firms led by the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan. The buyers prematurely delivered their notice to terminate, Montreal-based BCE said.

The buyers, meanwhile, said it was "very clear" that neither party owes a termination fee to the other.

"It is most unfortunate that BCE is threatening litigation over the failure of a mutual closing condition that the company insisted be included in the original acquisition agreement," the buyers said in a statement.

"Should BCE commence such baseless litigation, we are confident that it would not succeed."

The conflicting views on the break fee set the stage for a fight that could either end up in court or result in a settlement, said Troy Crandall, an analyst at MacDougall, MacDougall & MacTier.

BCE shares fell yesterday on the TSX before rebounding to $22.43 for a loss of 59 cents. REUTERS

Halifax **Sights of the season**

RYAN TAPLIN /METRO CANADA

A man walks past Lily's Lingerie on Dresden Row in Halifax as Callie Moore (left) and Kirsten Dennis model some of the merchandise yesterday. Lily's has hosted a live mannequin show every year since 2001.

Wall Street bonuses to drop by at least half: Comptroller

PAY Wall Street's bonuses will fall at least 50 per cent this year, the New York City comptroller said, predicting the pain will not be confined to top executives.

Federal regulators and New York Democratic Attorney General Andrew Cuomo want the officers of banks and brokerages that they nearly capsized to forego their bonuses.

The report by City Comptroller William Thompson reveals Wall Street's pay scale, for all of its workers, is not divorced from economic forces.

Last year, bonuses totalled $33.2 billion US, with payouts averaging over $180,000. REUTERS

Food hot, trendy yoga clothing not

STOCKS Retailers Lululemon Athletica Inc and Empire Co both showed double-digit profit growth in their latest quarterly results Thursday, but while the stock market warmed to Empire it was definitely cool on Lululemon.

In tough economic times, the difference comes down to what they sell, analysts said. Empire sells food. Lululemon sells trendy clothes.

"In an economic downturn, the attitude toward spending changes. People tend to shun the more extravagant items."
Ian Nakamoto

Empire, owner of Sobeys, Canada's No. 2 supermarket chain, earned $65.7 million in its second quarter, up 12.5 per cent from $58.4 million in the same period last year.

Empire's shares rose 0.5 per cent to $47.25.

Meanwhile, Lululemon shares tumbled more than 23 per cent after it posted solid quarterly results but warned year-end sales and profit would be weaker that it previously forecast.

Blaming a declining Canadian dollar and ailing retail sector, Lululemon cut its 2008 earnings forecast to a range of 55 cents to 57 cents a share from a previous forecast of 68 cents to 71 cents.

For the third quarter, Lululemon's profit rose 16 per cent to $8.8 million from $7.6 million for the same period last year.

Analysts say that as the economic downturn takes hold consumers have showed resistance to opening their purse strings for non-essential items.

"Obviously when you are in an economic downturn, the attitude toward spending changes. People tend to shun the more extravagant items and go more to the thing you need instead of the things you want," said Ian Nakamoto, director of research at MacDougall, MacDougall and MacTier.

"This is not going to be a short-term attitude change." REUTERS

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Junior selection camp opens

Thirty-eight players arrived in Ottawa Thursday for Canada's world junior hockey selection camp. A morning skate and an evening intrasquad game are scheduled for Friday and Saturday, but just an intrasquad game is on Sunday's agenda. The 22-player team will be named Monday. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Sports

Still no word on Luongo

Roberto Luongo, out since Nov. 22 with a groin injury, had been practising with the Canucks and there was speculation he could play in Saturday's game against the Oilers in Edmonton. Coach Alain Vigneault wouldn't comment, however. Luongo is still listed as week-to-week. METRO NEWS SERVICES

SPORTS@METRONEWS.CA

Coyotes own Wild, Habs zapped

NHL RESULTS

Wild 1 Coyotes 3

VS

Zbynek Michalek and Olli Jokinen scored in the final minute of the second period as the Phoenix Coyotes beat the Minnesota Wild 3-1.

Steven Reinprecht had two assists for the Coyotes, who had lost nine straight against the Wild. Jokinen scored for the third time in two games, and Joakim Lindstrom also lit the lamp for Phoenix, which won its second in a row. Ilya Brzygalov made 30 saves in the victory.

LIGHTNING 3, CANADIENS 1

Martin St. Louis scored twice and Tampa Bay stopped its nine-game losing streak with a 3-1 win over the Montreal Canadiens.

SHAUN BEST/REUTERS

Vincent Lecavalier celebrates his goal with Mark Recchi, left, last night. The Tampa Bay Lightning beat Montreal 3-1.

Vincent Lecavalier also lit the lamp and had an assist for the Lightning, who received two helpers from Lukas Krajicek to win their first game since Nov. 21 against Nashville. Olaf Kolzig stopped 31 shots, including all 24 he faced over the final two periods, for Tampa Bay.

Patrice Brisebois scored on the power play in the first period for the Canadiens, who had won four of their last five coming into Thursday night. Jaroslav Halak made 19 saves in defeat.

PENGUINS 9, ISLANDERS 2

Petr Sykora and Pascal Dupuis both recorded their first career hat tricks as the Pittsburgh Penguins pummelled the New York Islanders 9-2 at Mellon Arena.

Cole Harbour's Sidney Crosby collected three assists as the Penguins snapped a three-game losing streak.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Prospecting in Oil country

Saturday

VS

7 p.m.
TV: CBC
Radio: TEAM 1040

SCOTT RINTOUL
for Metro Vancouver

The Canucks wrap up their seven-game road trip Saturday night in Edmonton against an Oilers squad that is finding its form of late. It took a 41 save effort from Craig Anderson last night to snap the Oilers' three-game win streak, as Florida skated away with a 2-0 win. Vancouver defeated Edmonton 6-3 in the only previous matchup this season.

EVEN STEVEN: A win in the Alberta capital would give the Canucks a .500 record on their longest road trip of the season after beginning it with three straight losses.

POWER SURGE: Though Vancouver's powerplay ranks just 13th in NHL, the Canucks have powerplay goals in five straight games and Edmonton owns the second worst penalty kill in the league.

THE ILERS: What's happened to the O? Edmonton scored the fourth most goals in the West last season, but only LA and Minnesota have fewer tallies this season. Not a single player on the roster has reached double digits in goals through 27 games.

NOT SO SWEET: The Oilers' record in their own barn is abysmal thus far, with just three wins in nine outings. Edmonton's eight points on home ice are the fewest in the NHL.

Bears almost give it away

NFL RESULT

Bears 27 **Saints** 24 (OT)

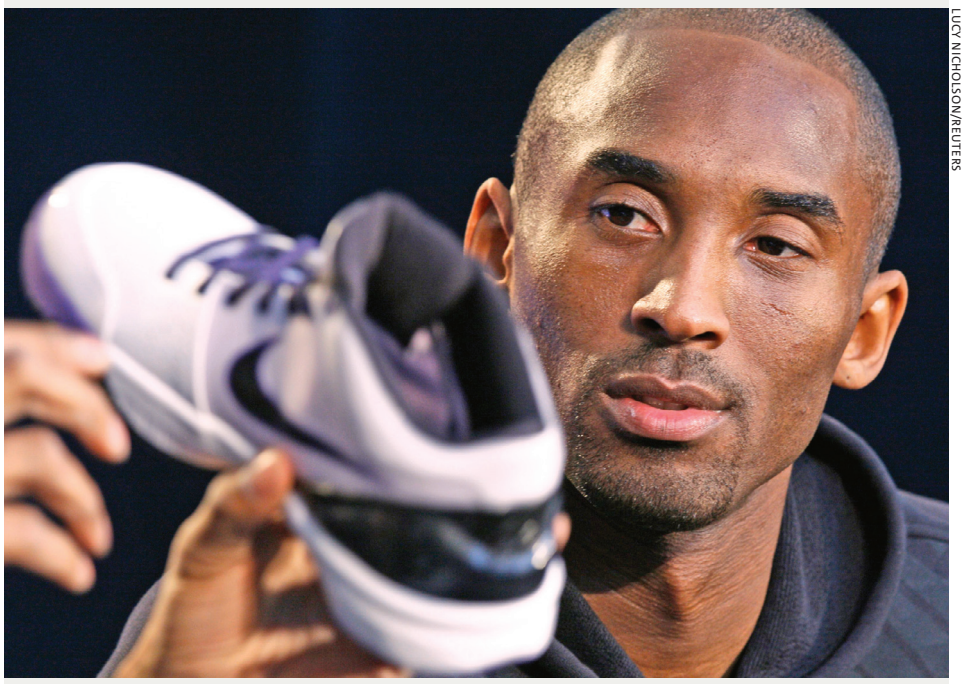
VS

REUTERS/JOHN GRESS

Drew Brees is pressured by Canadian Israel Idonije of the Bears last night. Chicago won 27-24.

Robbie Gould kicked a 35-yard field goal in overtime and possibly booted New Orleans out of playoff contention, as the Bears outlasted the Saints 27-24 last night. Chicago (8-6) moved within a half game of first-place Minnesota in the NFC North Division race. Chicago didn't muster much offensively, instead riding special teams to victory. Danieal Manning returned the opening kickoff 83 yards for a touchdown and returned another to set up a score. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Basketball **Kobe's new kicks**



LUCY NICHOLSON/REUTERS

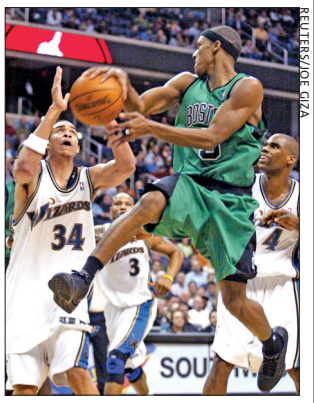
Kobe Bryant speaks at a webcast to unveil his new Nike Zoom Kobe IV basketball shoe in Los Angeles Thursday. The shoe will be available for sale in China from January 1, 2009, and in the U.S., Canada and Europe from February 2009

Celtics win 13th in a row

NBA RESULT

Celtics 122 **Wizards** 88

VS



REUTERS/JOE GIZA

Boston's Rajon Rondo looks to pass off the ball in Washington last night. The Celtics won by 34, their 13th straight victory.

NBA Paul Pierce and Ray Allen each finished with 22 points as the Boston Celtics won their 13th straight game last night, 122-88, over the Washington Wizards to continue their best winning streak in over two decades.

The Celtics improved their NBA-best record to 21-2. The 13-game winning streak is the longest for Boston since a 14-game run in 1985-86, a championship season. The Celtics have won nine straight road games. Their 34-point margin was the most lopsided victory of the season for the Celtics, and gave Boston its best start in franchise history.

Pierce added eight assists and six rebounds, and was 12-for-12 from the free throw line, while Allen's offensive showing came off an impressive night of shooting, as he went 8-for-13 from the floor, including 4-for-7 from outside the arc.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Sports in brief

MLB Matt Clement has agreed to a minor-league deal with the Toronto Blue Jays, MLB.com reported Thursday. A team official said nothing was official yet, although an announcement could come Friday. The right-hander hasn't pitched in the Major Leagues since 2006.

MLB The New York Mets acquired relief pitcher J.J. Putz from the Seattle Mariners in a three-team trade that also involves the Cleveland Indians. The deal came only hours after the Mets officially signed former Angels reliever Francisco Rodriguez, who set the major league record with 62 saves in 2008. It is believed that Putz will serve as the set-up man.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

SCOREBOARD

NHL

THURSDAY NIGHT'S RESULTS

Florida 2 Edmonton 0
Tampa Bay 3 Montreal 1
Columbus 2 Nashville 1 (SO)
Philadelphia 6 Carolina 5 (SO)
Phoenix 3 Minnesota 1
Pittsburgh 9 N.Y. Islanders 2
St. Louis at Los Angeles
Anaheim at San Jose

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Laval won Vanier Cup this year, will host next year

The Vanier Cup is headed to Quebec City. Laval University won the rights to Canadian university football's championship game for 2009 and 2010, beating out a series of last-minute bids. Next year's contest will mark the first time it will be played in Quebec and just the second time it will be played outside Ontario. METRO NEWS SERVICES

A grieving father's pain leads him on Voyage

The first snow has barely melted, an icy wind chills Paul Harbridge to the bone, but he's determined to play 18 holes.

There's not another soul around at the Centennial Park Golf Centre in Toronto, which turns out to be a good thing. When Harbridge undoes his pants to tuck his shirt in to combat the cold, he fails to take into account the weight of the golf balls in his pockets and his pants fall to his knees.

His momentary chagrin turns to a smile as he realizes it's the kind of silly thing that would have given his daughter Helena a good chuckle.

Helena Harbridge died in her sleep in April 2006 at age 18 of a suspected heart arrhythmia. She was at the University of West Georgia on a golf scholarship, where she was en route to becoming an academic all-American with a sterling 4.0 GPA and had won a tournament in her freshman season.

She had just spoken to her parents on the phone that Easter weekend and told them she was going to have a nap. She never woke up. She'd had health problems as a child, but were thought to be in the past.

"As a parent, you lose a child, it just tears your guts out, it tears your soul out," says Harbridge. "I remember the day Helena passed away, my first instinct was, 'I just want to go with Helena. I've driven her to Brownies. I've driven to her golf tournaments. I drove her to university. I want to go with her to heaven, you know.'"

Harbridge said he began to read a lot of books about religion because he wanted to know where his daughter had gone. One book that had an impact was Maria Rosa Menocal's The Ornament of the World: How Muslims, Jews and Christians Created a Culture of Tolerance in Medieval Spain.

"This really touched something in my heart, because my wife is from Spain and I always thought that my children most likely had Jewish, Muslim and Christian ancestry, because the Muslims had been in Spain for nearly 800 years and there were Jewish settlements there during the Roman era."

At the same time, Harbridge began to think he would like to write a book, he was struck by repeated images he saw on TV in news reports from the Middle East: Mothers coming out of the wreckage of bombed-out houses carrying their dead children.

"I'd seen this before, but for the first time I knew that grief, I knew what they were feeling and I said, 'This is crazy. This has got to stop.'"

One day, he had an idea for a children's book and he wrote it in a couple days.

Helena's Voyage, published in the United Kingdom (O Books, $11.95), is about a sick little girl who goes on an adventure at night. She's taken by an angel in his sailboat to visit a Christian city, a Muslim city and a Jewish city, as well as a war-torn area. It's about the simple lessons of love and faith. "I think at a higher level, I think what I'm trying to say is these three religions ... they teach the same values," says Harbridge.

Harbridge also did all the illustrations for the book on computer. He would light two candles while doing the pictures, one for Helena and one for her Spanish grandfather, who died two months later.

PHOTO COURTESY PAUL HARBRIDGE

Helena Harbridge died of a suspected heart arrhythmia in 2006 while on a golf scholarship at a Georgia university.

"Helena's Voyage is, I think, my labour of love, one of the ways I'm trying to use this huge love for Helena, follow her direction to find another place to put this love," says Harbridge.

"I hope this does good in her memory."

Helena found her strength through golf after struggling with a number of illnesses as a child. When she was 10, her parents asked her older brother, Daniel, to take her along on a round with his friends.

So she started playing with three 14-year-old boys at Scarlett Woods Golf Club, where her natural swing caught the eye of pro Lianne Ritchie, who gave her free lessons for three years.

"She had low self-esteem and she used to call herself the 'sick girl,'" says Harbridge.

"That's what she used to say when she was down, 'Oh, I'm the sick girl.'... Every time I used to hear an ambulance, I would say, 'Oh no, is Helena going to the hospital because of asthma or something?' But when she started golf, she started to really grow and then she started calling herself the 'golfer girlie.'"

Golf remains a link between Harbridge and his daughter, as he plays his first round of the season on the day she passed away, April 15, and usually a frigid final round of the year on her birthday, Oct. 29.

"When I wrote the book or when I go golfing or when I'm alone with her Mom doing some of the things or talking about some of the things we used to do together, that's when I really feel close to Helena."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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Visit metronews.ca/movies to get showtimes, watch trailers and read reviews.

Movies&Entertainment

EDITOR: TINA COSTANZA, TINA.COSTANZA@METRONEWS.CA

Movies

Just golden

Pg 20

The Curious Case of Benjamin Button (starring Brad Pitt and Cate Blanchett), Frost/Nixon and Doubt led the Golden Globe nominations with five nods each. All the buzz around The Dark Knight fell flat, as the blockbuster only picked up one nomination.

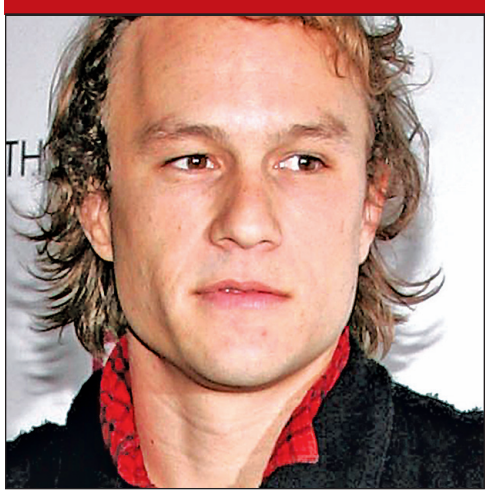
movies Pg 22

Doubt's Viola Davis attracts critical acclaim, awards buzz.

music Pg 30

So what's on Alan Cross' Christmas music playlist?

7th heaven Pg 36



Heath Ledger picking up award nominations.

Tokyo Mater to play ahead of Bolt

Disney-Pixar will premiere its 3-D short film Tokyo Mater at theaters nationwide before its animated movie Bolt. The short is the fourth in Disney-Pixar's Cars Toons series, inspired by the hit 2006 film Cars. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Movies

🌐🌐🌐🌐🌐 A CLASSIC; 🌐🌐🌐🌐 EXCELLENT; 🌐🌐🌐 GOOD; 🌐🌐 FAIR; 🌐 POOR

And the nominees are ...

Benjamin Button and Frost/Nixon lead the Golden Globes pack

A wide variety of films from heart-rending Slumdog Millionaire to tension-filled Frost/Nixon" shared the spotlight of Golden Globe nominations Thursday as Hollywood marched toward the Oscars.

The Curious Case of Benjamin Button, about a man who ages backward, and Frost/Nixon, which recounts the interviews of disgraced U.S. President Richard Nixon by British journalist David Frost, each earned five nominations including best film drama to lead the nominees.

"It's a really good morning," Frost/Nixon director Ron Howard told Reuters. "We need this kind of acknowledgment to cut through the clutter" of numerous holiday films.

Benjamin Button and "Frost/Nixon were joined in the race for best movie drama by Slumdog Millionaire, about a poor Indian man competing for love and money on a TV game show, and relationship sagas Revolutionary Road and The Reader.

Doubt, a tale of sexual abuse in the Catholic

continued >>

The Curious Case of Benjamin Button, starring Brad Pitt, received five Golden Globe nominations.

The world doesn't turn in sci-fi remake

The Day the Earth **Stood Still**

Director: Scott Derrickson
Stars: Keanu Reeves, Jennifer Connelly
Classification: PG
Rating: 🌐🌐

TALIA SOGHOMONIAN
Metro World News

REVEW Back in 1951, the thought of aliens invading the Earth was flippant. The world was still recovering from the Second World War, the Cold War had set in and extraterrestrials were the new Germans.

Robert Wise's now-classic movie The Day the Earth Stood Still carried a timely anti-nuclear message, attempting to stretch the reigning fears of the time; the Cold War was setting in and the Korean War was just around the corner. Almost 60 years later, in Scott Derrickson's remake, the global situation has changed, this time with an ecological message, the latest point of inspiration for screenwriters being global warming. From the latest Bond flick Quantum of Solace to The Transporter3, raising awareness of the "unconventional truth" has been like a light bulb of a bright new idea.

On the web

- Visit metronews.ca/movies to see trailers for both Delgo and The Day the Earth Stood Still.

Jennifer Connelly plays Helen, a microbiologist who is rounded up by the government one night, along with some fellow eggheads, when a giant space object seems headed straight to earth. Instead, it lands in Central Park and it turns out to be a glowing giant marble.

Out of it steps out a human-shaped alien who later morphs into Klaatu (Keanu Reeves), accompanied by an equally cold towering cold metal robot who seems lifted directly from Metropolis.

Klaatu is actually there to warn humanity that it's time to go, given that we're destroying the planet and the universe needs the planet to sustain life. But why warn us that they're going to destroy us?

The Day the Earth Stood Still is only about half the film it could have been. But its cowardly treatment of the political issue at its centre kills it.

Freudenthal gets Wimpy
Thor Freudenthal has agreed to direct Diary of a Wimpy Kid, the story of a junior high wiseguy. Wimpy is a live-action story based on Jeff Kinney's illustrated tales about Greg Heffley, a smart aleck who frequently gets in trouble. REUTERS

Movies

A CLASSIC; EXCELLENT; GOOD; FAIR; POOR

<< ...continued

Church, tied Benjamin Button and Frost/Nixon with five nominations, but was shut out of the race for best film drama.

Also excluded from best film races were Milk, with Sean Penn playing slain gay rights activist Harvey Milk, and Batman flick The Dark Knight. Milk did, however, earn a nomination for Penn as best actor and Dark Knight provided a nomination for the late Heath Ledger in the supporting actor category.

Golden Globe Awards are also are handed out for best film musical or comedy and that group of nominees included Burn After Reading, Happy-Go-Lucky, In Bruges, Mamma Mia! and director Woody Allen's Vicky Cristina Barcelona.

The Golden Globes, which are voted on by roughly 90 members of the Hollywood Foreign Press Association and given out on Jan. 11, are often an indicator of Oscar competitors because many of the same films are recognized by both groups.

But this year, none of the Golden Globes' musical or comedy nominees have been picked by pundits as contenders for Oscars, the industry's top honors given out by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. Moreover, groups such as the New York Film Critics Circle have favored dramas like Milk.

"The award season is all over the map and no one seems to agree on any one thing," said Pete Hammond, a veteran awards watcher and critic for Web site Hollywood.com. "The Golden Globes bring other movies into the mix like The Reader and Revolutionary Road so that we now have a genuinely wide open race."

GoldenGlobes

THE NOMINEES: For a complete list of Golden Globe nominees, vist metronews.ca/entertainment.

Joining Penn in the category for best actor in a film drama were Benjamin Button star Brad Pitt, as well as Frank Langella, who plays Nixon in Frost/Nixon. The final two nominees were Mickey Rourke as an aging sports star in The Wrestler and Leonardo DiCaprio in Revolutionary Road.

"I never take these nominations for granted and feel like this one is just as exciting as all the others," said DiCaprio, a past nominee for The Departed and Blood Diamond.

Best dramatic actresses nominees were his Revolutionary Road co-star, Kate Winslet, as well as Meryl Streep for Doubt, Angelina Jolie in Changeling, Anne Hathaway in Rachel Getting Married and Kristin Scott Thomas in French film I've Loved You So Long.

But in a surprise, Benjamin Button star Cate Blanchett failed to make the actress list. REUTERS

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Delgo

Director: Marc F. Alder, Jason Maurer
Stars: Freddie Prinze Jr., Jennifer Love Hewitt
Classification: PG
Rating:

PHIL BROWN
for Metro Canada

Delgo better left in bargain bins than in movie theatres

REVIEW Sometimes I wonder if the people who make family films hate children. Sure, there are plenty of children's movies that are wonderful, but for the most part they rank amongst the most boring, clichéd, unfunny, and all around terrible movies.

It's as if family filmmakers are convinced that their core audience is so young and stupid that they'll watch anything. Case in point: Delgo, an almost incomprehensible film that will be filling department store clearance bins very soon.

This CGI-animated movie is about a mythical land ruled by flying people, reptilian people, goblins, and non-speaking monsters (they all have actual names, but they are difficult-to-remember nonsense words).

Because of a former evil queen, there is a long-brooding feud between the flying people and the reptilian people which leads to a war that can only be stopped by a plucky reptile boy and an impossibly perfect flying princess, who falls in love and help unite the fighting creatures.

It's all pretty clichéd fantasy storytelling that could have been salvaged by clever writing, impressive animation, or entertaining celebrity voice casting, but sadly the film boasts none of the above.

Delgo was directed and co-written by Marc F. Alder and Jason Maurer. They had never made a film before and it shows. Their script is predictable from the page one and the animation they supervised has a distinct "direct-to-DVD" quality.

As with all CGI movies the cast is stacked with recognizable names, all of whom were wasted. Freddie Prinze Jr. and Jennifer Love Hewitt voice the lead characters and remind everyone why they've disappeared from the spotlight, while the likes of Malcolm McDowell and Eric Idle phone in supporting roles.

In the age of Pixar children shouldn't be forced to sit through films like this anymore. Kids movies should be just as intelligent and well crafted as the grown-up movies playing with them at the multiplexes. Garbage like Delgo should be filling landfills where it belongs.

Atlantis Rising being adapted

Writer-director Joby Harold is negotiating to write the adaptation of the comic book Atlantis Rising for DreamWorks. Len Wiseman (Live Free or Die Hard) is expected to direct the apocalyptic science-fiction project. REUTERS

Movies

A CLASSIC; EXCELLENT; GOOD; FAIR; POOR

Frost/Nixon taut, dazzling movie

Frost/Nixon

Director: Ron Howard
Stars: Frank Langella, Michael Sheen
Classification: PG
Rating:

STEVE GOW
for Metro Canada

REVIEW It certainly isn't a given that the play Frost/Nixon would make a great movie.

After all, not only is it about Richard Nixon — one of America's least popular presidents — but it's based on a series of simple TV interviews from the 1970s.

Not exactly the stuff of cinematic awe.

When director Ron Howard (A Beautiful Mind) decided to tackle this adaptation however, he was brilliant enough to cast the same acclaimed duo that carried the play on Broadway. As such, the film features some of the year's greatest performances.

In the film, David Frost (Michael Sheen of The Queen) is a flashy English TV host who craves success in the States. Shortly after Nixon (Frank Langella) resigns following the Watergate scandal, Frost gambles his career on a series of interviews with the former president.

Convinced the "grand inquisitor" will just pitch him puffballs, Nixon aims to instead redeem his image in the eyes of the public but before long, the conversations escalate into a tense set of mind games.

As you may suspect, Frost/Nixon is extremely weighty in wordiness, but it's so tautly written that even the most antsy audience member will be riveted. Layered with subtext that reveals a fascinating glimpse into two opposing personalities, Frost/Nixon is only enhanced by its unexpected relevance.

A surprisingly brilliant man, Nixon was seemingly seething with his own admission of failure as president. Sound like any familiar contemporary political figures you know — except for the brilliant part, anyhow?

More than anything, Frost/Nixon will be appreciated for its dazzling performances. While it will surely show Sheen the golden-paved road to stardom, it proves a captivating climax to the underappreciated career of veteran Frank Langella.

As it happens, life truly does imitate art.

GoldenGlobes

BEST MOTION PICTURE (DRAMA): Frost/Nixon
BEST ACTOR (DRAMA): Frank Langella.
• Frost/Nixon has a total of five nominations.

On the web

• Visit metronews.ca/movies for Frost/Nixon showtimes, to see a trailer of the film, and hear audio excerpts from the Watergate recordings.

Doubt a dream for Davis

Movie profile

STEVE GOW
for Metro Canada

Viola Davis may get recognized mostly for playing the tiny role of a crack mother in the 2002 drama Antwone Fisher, but that's about to change — even if it's not for a boost in screen time.

With one lengthy, powerful scene in the upcoming drama Doubt, Davis isn't just holding her own opposite Meryl Streep, she's winning the hearts of moviegoers and critics. Another modest part for the 43-year-old actress, it's already garnered her an award from the National Board of Review and some very juicy Oscar buzz.

"It's impossible to ignore but it's almost impossible to embrace also," Davis said over the phone from Manhattan. "I'm the actor who gets the call from their agent, I go to the audition, I hope I get the job … I'm the working actor, so the Oscar talk, the National Board of Review, I can't grasp it."

Viola Davis appears in Doubt.

It's certainly not an accolade that's undeserved. In Doubt — it opens tomorrow — Davis plays the mother of a child suspected of being victimized by a Catholic priest in 1960's New York.

When confronted by the alarmed school principal (Streep), Davis introduces a startling perspective. It's a rich, revelatory scene that has been described as the "crucible of the story."

Not lost on Davis, she developed her own 50-page biography of the character before filming began.

"I'm a neurotic actor, are you kidding me? I'm a theatre geek, I work on neuroses," Davis said. "It's one thing if you have several scenes, you have an opportunity to show and play different aspects of a character's life and that can inform your performance in fantastic ways.

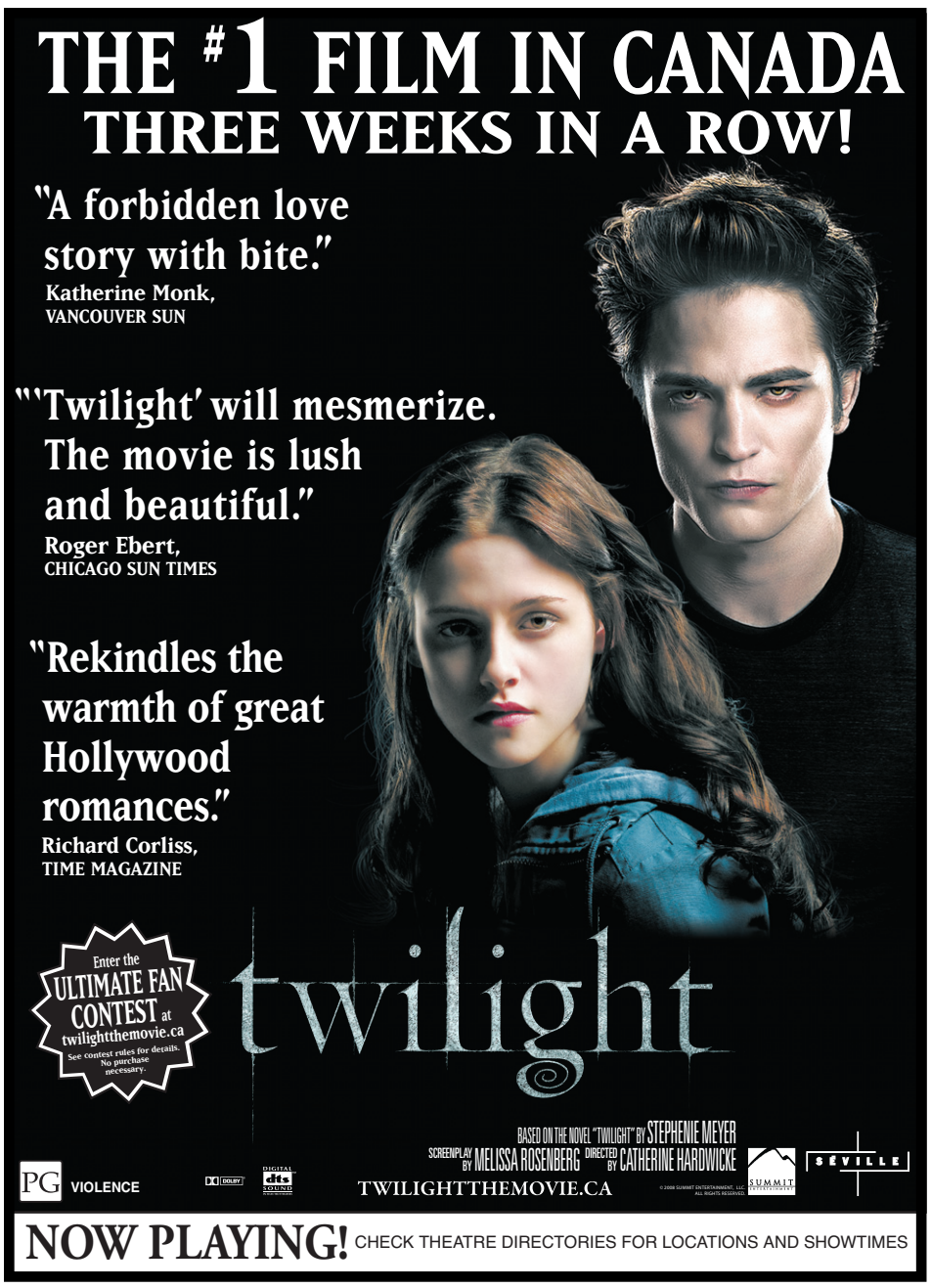
"But when you only have one scene and you're coming into that scene, you're bringing a whole life into that scene with you."

Besides, when you're working opposite one of the silver screen's legends, you certainly want to have your act together. For Davis, starring with Streep was perhaps the biggest dream come true.

"(It feels like) a big tornado hit just like in the Wizard of Oz," Davis said proudly.

GoldenGlobes

BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS (DRAMA) NOD: Viola Davis (Doubt).
• Doubt has five nominations.



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Vince Vaughn Reese Witherspoon

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★★★★! ★★★★!
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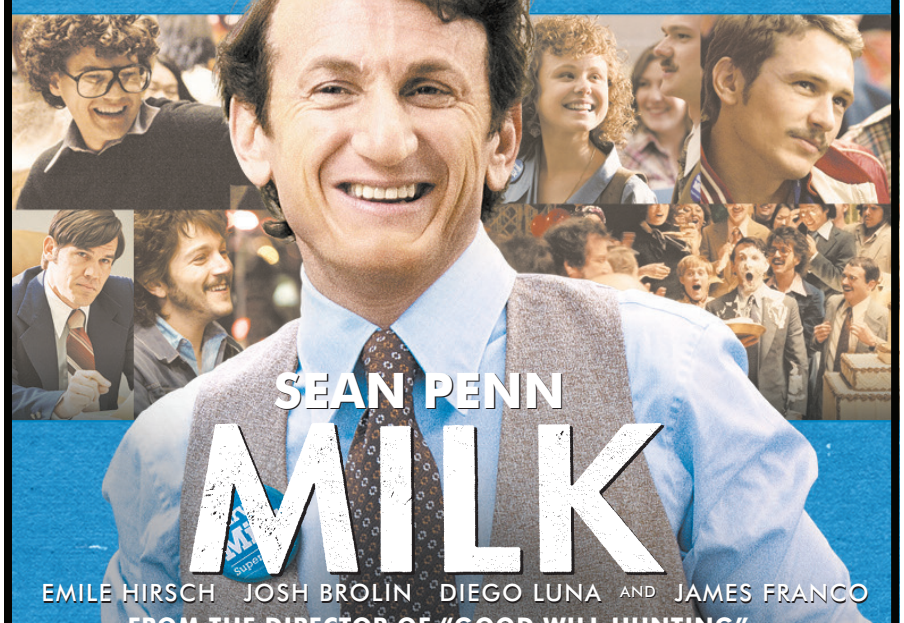

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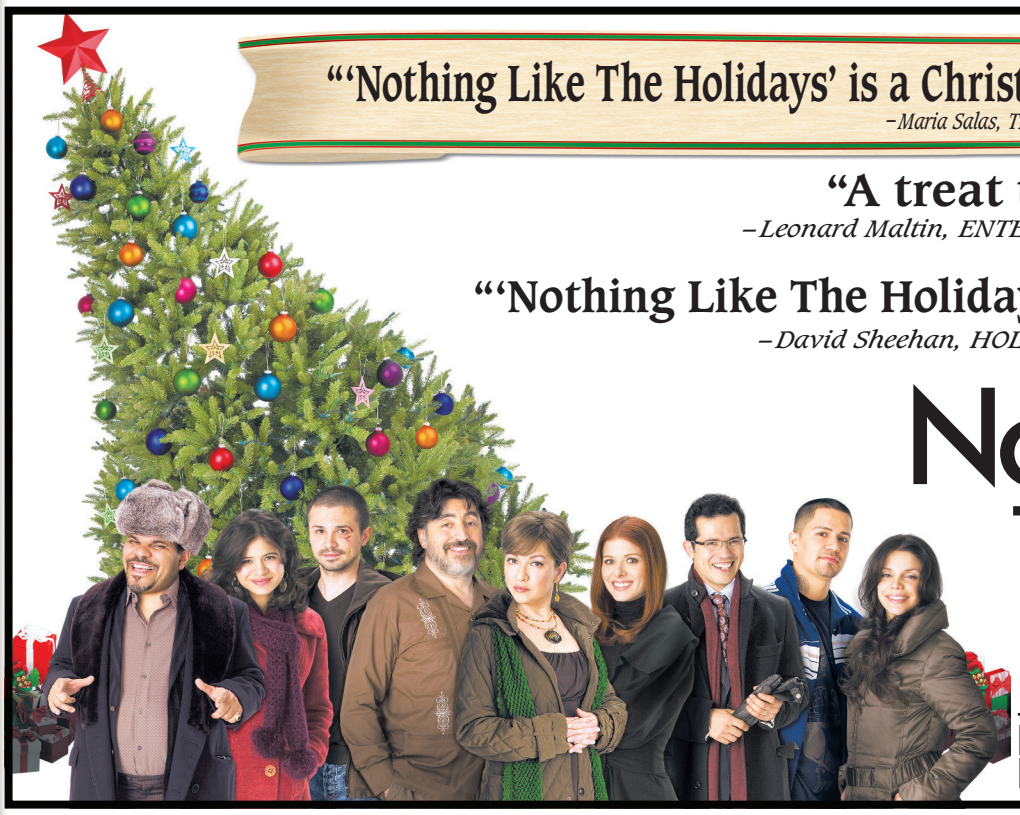
"'Nothing Like The Holidays' is a Christmas feast you won't want to miss!"
–Maria Salas, TERRA.COM

"A treat to watch."
–Leonard Maltin, ENTERTAINMENT TONIGHT

"'Nothing Like The Holidays' is warm, fuzzy and fun."
–David Sheehan, HOLLYWOOD CLOSE-UPS



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Ruffalo drops out of film

Mark Ruffalo, who's brother died tragically this month, has dropped out of the indie drama Greenburg, according to the Hollywood Reporter. He will likely be replaced by Ben Stiller in the film. PEOPLE.COM

Movies

●●●●● A CLASSIC; ●●●● EXCELLENT; ●●● GOOD; ●● FAIR; ● POOR

'Yes we can' message in Carrey's new film

Movie **feature**

STEVE GOW
for Metro Canada

Bradley Cooper will never forget the night Barack Obama won the presidency. He was in a hospital watching the elated event unfold on a battered television while shooting a movie appropriately enough called The Hangover.

Recently in Toronto to publicize his latest film, the former star of TV's Alias had been pondering the shifting winds of America.

"We've become more isolationist as a society but I think that's definitely changing. You can feel it, especially with the President-elect, there's a whole new energy (in America)," he said.

This new outlook couldn't be better signified than with the release of Jim Carrey's comedy Yes Man. A life-affirming tale about a slacker who's life has been stalled by complacency, Yes Man explores the journey he undergoes after agreeing to say "yes" to everything — whether it be guitar lessons, learning to speak Korean or to some brawler asking him if he wants a punch in the mouth.

"I didn't realize how much (the message of the film) was going to affect me," admits Cooper who plays Carrey's best friend in the movie. "When I read the script I just thought 'what a cool hook — this guy's got to say yes to everything'."

"(And) it's so relevant. We've been watching a guy (Obama) with the mantra 'Yes We Can' behind him for two years … its really interesting, the timing with everything."

The comedy may mark a turn in Jim Carrey's mindset as well. After attempting to show fans a more serious side in last year's box-office fumbler The Number 23, Yes Man brings Carrey back to the form that once made him Hollywood's most popular funnyman.

"The reason why I wanted to do it was Jim," said Cooper. "Watching him work in close proximity is kind of amazing. It's like watching one of the greatest comedians alive today for three months.

"I don't think I've worked with a guy that's that comedically gifted since Vince Vaughn (in Wedding Crashers)," Cooper said before stating that the two mentors have achieved success because "both of them have this unnanny ability to fail.

"They really are willing to make complete fools of themselves just to try. There's this abandon in their acting that gave me a lot of inspiration."

Jim Carrey stars in the new film Yes Man, opening next Friday.

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Messing minority in new film

FEATURE Debra Messing sticks out like a sore thumb in her latest movie, Nothing Like the Holidays. But that is just fine by her.

In the comedy, which debuts in theaters today, a Puerto Rican family comes together at Christmas for the first time in three years, and Messing plays a very non-Latina career-driven executive wife of the family's eldest brother, played by John Leguizamo.

"I'd never been an outsider in a film," Messing said. "I very much felt like the white Jewish girl and it was the first time I had ever been the minority on the set."

Messing tried to "access my inner Latina" by recalling her elementary school Spanish during the shoot, she said.

The 40-year-old Messing said the film marks a step forward in Hollywood because it is essentially a mainstream holiday film but one that focuses on a minority, Latino family.

Nothing Like the Holidays follows the Rodriguez family during a holiday gathering in Chicago that is prompted by the youngest brother's return from combat overseas.

An ensemble piece, the movie details the trials of each family member's career or personal relationships. Messing's character, Sarah, for instance, struggles with whether to take a new, high-powered job while facing pressure from her husband and mother-in-law to start a family.

"That's not specific to the Puerto Rican culture," Messing said of the themes the movie pursues. "I could see an Italian family on screen, I could see a Jewish family on screen. You could just fill in the blank, because family is family."

Messing, who shot to stardom on eight seasons of the NBC sitcom Will & Grace, said she hoped Nothing Like the Holidays would help break down cultural barriers in Hollywood in much the same way Will & Grace brought gay characters to mainstream TV audiences in a hit prime-time show.

REUTERS

On the web

- To read a review of Nothing Like the Holidays, and to see a trailer of the film, visit metronews.ca/movies.

Also opening

- Also hitting Vancouver theatre's this week is the French-language film Un Conte de Noël, starring actress Catherine Deneuve. Visit metronews.ca/movies to read a review of the movie and for screentimes.

Touching look into killer and victim's hearts

The **Killer**

Director: Cedric Anger
Stars: Gregoire Colin, Gilbert Melki
Classification: STC
Rating: ●●●

ROBYN YOUNG
for Metro Canada

REVIEW The Killer, a French film-noir entry, written and directed by Cedric Anger, follows the path of two men from completely opposite worlds — murderer and victim — who forge a connection, however stunted it may be.

Each man's life is indelibly altered through his meeting with the other.

It's almost Christmas and successful businessman Leo Zimmerman seems to have it all: A young daughter he adores, a beautiful wife and a luxurious Parisian flat. But underneath the façade, he's full of pain, both physically and emotionally.

His life does an about face one day when Dimitri Kopas (Gregoire Colin) enters his office under the guise of asking the financier for his expertise on an inheritance investment. Leo (Gilbert Melki) soon discovers Dimitri is not a client at all, but a hitman sent to kill him.

Panicked, he strikes a deal with Dimitri, begging for a few more days to complete a business transaction, thus securing his daughter's financial future.

While the film is filled with suspense and tension, Anger also offers a peek into the heart of a killer and the story ends up being as much about his love, loss and despair as his victim's, with a surprisingly touching conclusion.

The Killer is a French film-noir entry.

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Lewis to get an Oscar

Jerry Lewis finally is getting some respect from the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, whose board of governors has voted to honor him with a special Oscar for his humanitarian work. **REUTERS**

Reel Time

●●●●● A CLASSIC; ●●●● EXCELLENT; ●●● GOOD; ●● FAIR; ● POOR

Movie **morsels**

Australia

●●●

REVIEW Australia is a beautifully filmed study of a vast land that — as one character says — has "a strange power." What director Baz Luhrmann should fret over is the drawn-out narrative that plays to melodramatic excess. Set during the outbreak of the Second World War, Australia features Nicole Kidman as Lady Ashley, widow of a mysteriously murdered cattle ranch owner. When confronted by her husband's rival with a takeover bid, Ashley hires a maverick stockman (Hugh Jackman) and joins him on a massive cattle drive across the outback.
Steve Gow/for Metro Canada

Bolt

●●●●

REVIEW Essentially, this tale about the unyielding loyalty of canines is as charming and heart-tugging as any Disney movie out there. Even better, the film excels in skill, depth and maturity equaling that of Wall-E and Ratatouille. Not really surprising since Pixar's brilliant chief John Lasseter is now running Disney's animation department as well.
Steve Gow/for Metro Canada

Four Christmases

●●●

REVIEW Vince Vaughn and Reese Witherspoon star as a professional couple who always avoid their families during the holidays. After the film's worst plot contrivance traps them in the country and broadcasts their availability to their kin, the couple — Vince-Vaughn and Reese Witherspoon — embark on their dreaded four Christmases.
Phil Brown/for Metro Canada

Quantum of Solace

●●●

REVIEW The movie starts literally minutes after its predecessor, Casino Royale, ended, with a pre-credit car chase that sums up director Marc Forster's brisk approach to the story. Action scenes are the meat of Bond movies. Most of what we see in Quantum of Solace is at least as good as the standards set in previous films; relentless, and more than a bit improbable. Daniel Craig's James Bond is still an excellent incarnation of the character.
Rick McGinnis/Metro Canada

Twilight

●●

REVIEW Kristin Stewart stars as Bella, a young girl who moves to a small town and becomes instantly captivated by a classmate named Edward (Robert Pattinson) who is part of a very peculiar and insular family known as the Cullens. As Bella becomes more attracted to Edward, she discovers that the Cullens are a clan of vampires … but very safe emo-vampires who only drink animal blood and spend of most of their time silently emoting and looking pretty rather than preying on helpless victims.
Phil Brown/for Metro Canada

Academy Awards' no nunsense films

In Focus

Richard Crouse

mrchaos33@hotmail.com

If Meryl Streep earns an Academy Award for her performance as the formidable Sister Aloysius Beauvier, a nun who confronts a priest after suspecting him of abusing an African American student in Doubt, she will join a short but prestigious list of actresses who have won gold playing nuns.

The first to win an Oscar for portraying a sister was Jennifer Jones in 1943's The Song of Bernadette; next Susan Sarandon won for playing Sister Helen Prejean in Dead Man Walking.

Nuns have a long cinematic history and everyone from Ingrid Bergman to Mary Tyler Moore to Eric Idle has donned a habit for dramatic effect. Nuns have flown, sung and even been shipwrecked with Robert Mitchum on a Pacific Island, but my favorite big screen nun is Sister Assumpta in The Dangerous Lives of Alter Boys.

The title sounds ripped from the headlines, but is actually taken from a 1994 novel by Chris Fuhrman.

Set in the early 1970s, the film revolves around a group of teenage boys obsessed with comic books. Their ringleader, Tim, played by Kieran Culkin, is a prankster who schemes to get revenge on Sister Assumpta, a joyless strict nun with a prosthetic leg played by Jodie Foster.

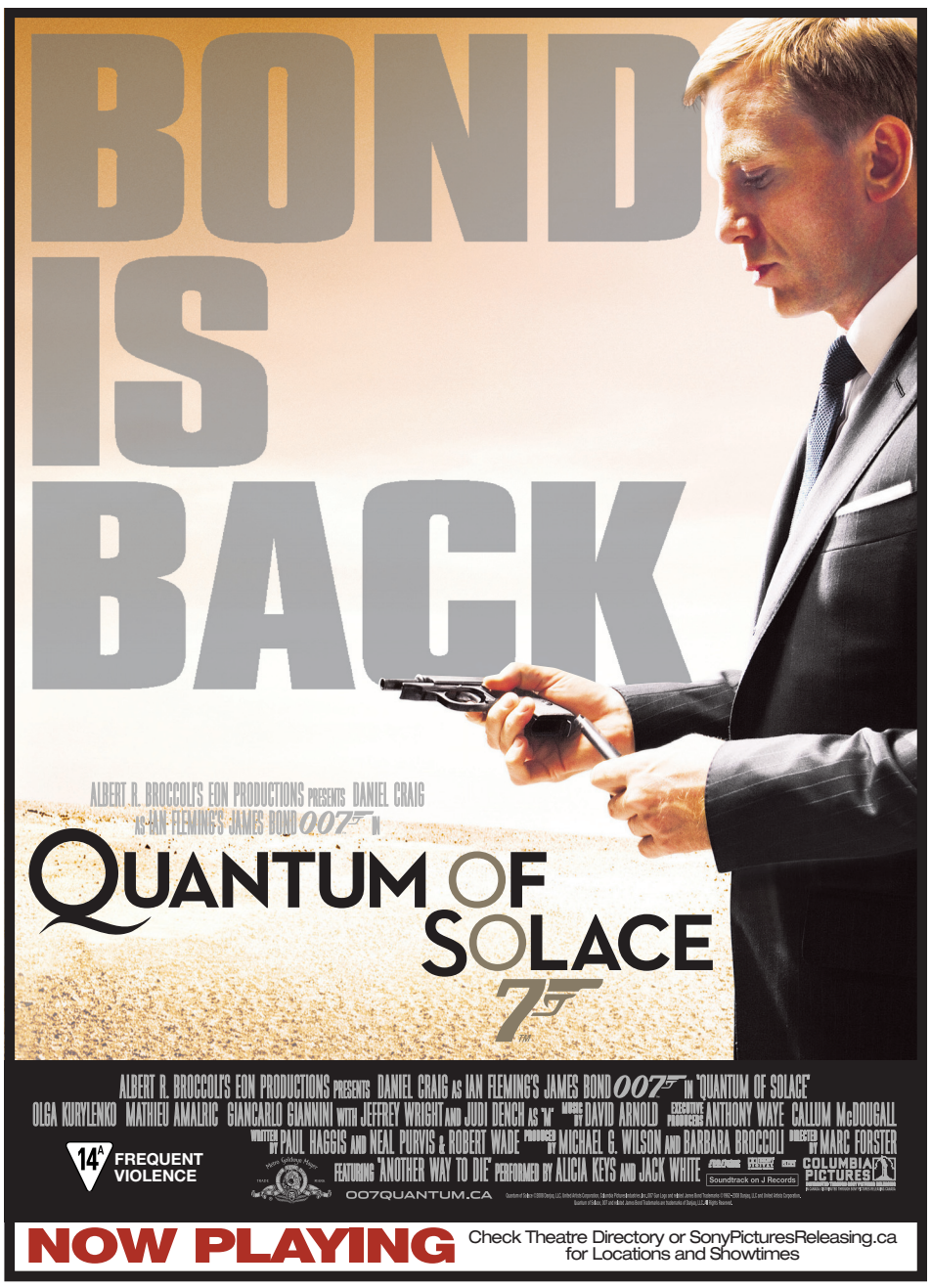
Learning most of what they know of the world from the superhero adventures written by Stan Lee, they believe there are only two types of people — heroes and villains. Sister Assumpta falls into the latter category and becomes the subject of a "blasphemous" comic book drawn by the boys featuring the evil motorcycle driving Nunzilla.

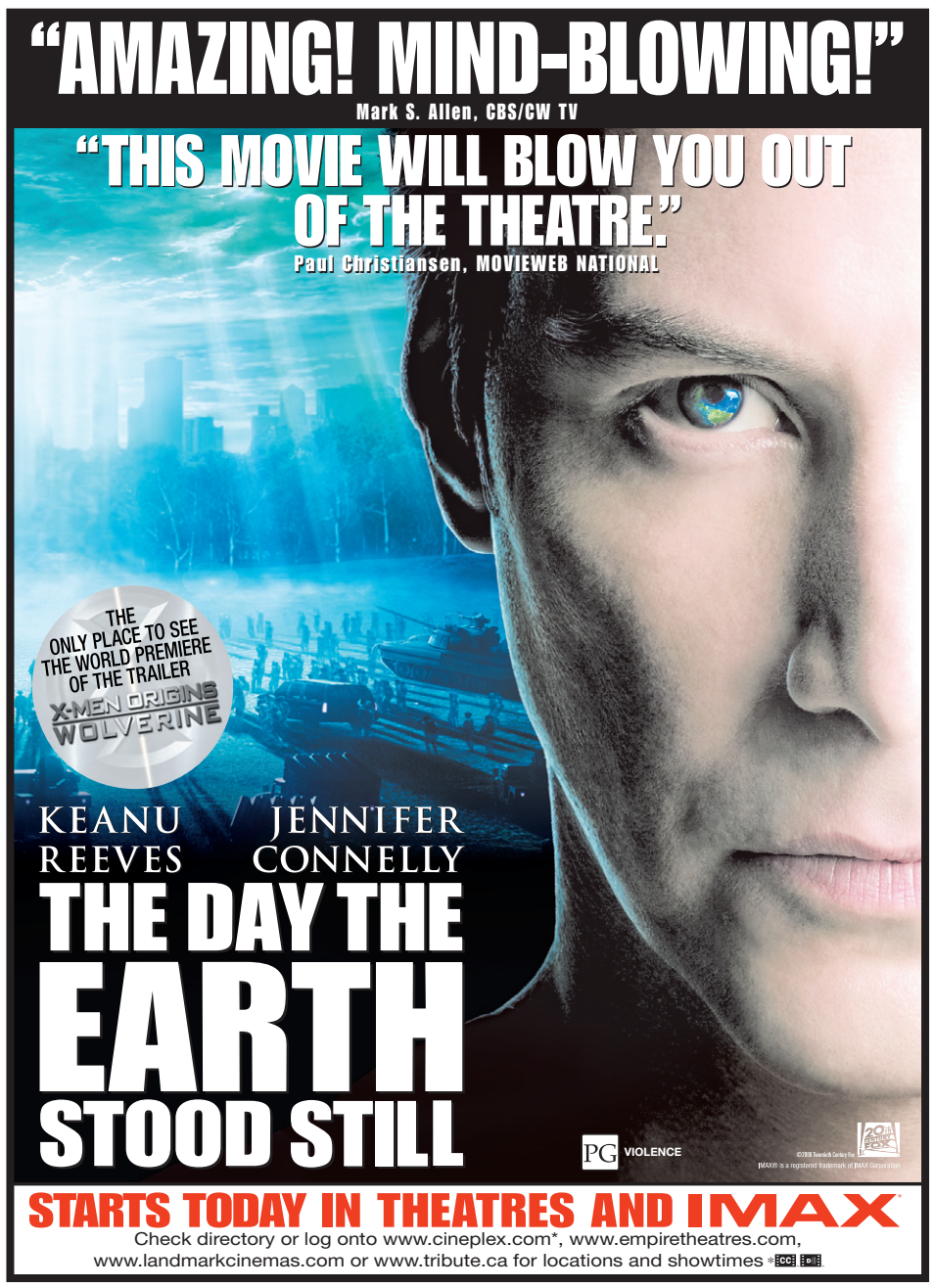
The guys imagine themselves as the heroes who do battle with Nunzilla's sisterly minions. Once the comic book is discovered the boys are expelled from school assured by Sister Assumpta that not only are they not welcome at school anymore, they likely won't be welcome in Heaven either.

Foster's Sister Assumpta spits hellfire in every sentence. She plays the sister as a strict disciplinarian who truly believes she is doing the best to save her students from damnation. Her peg leg is just a physical manifestation of her rigid personality. It's something different for Foster who pulls it off with aplomb.

For more adventurous viewers there are nunsploitation movies. Sometimes called Convent Erotica, these movies are not for the easily offended and have titles like Killer Nun and Behind the Convent Walls. Watch them, but don't forget to say ten Hail Marys afterwards.

Richard Crouse is the author of Son of the 100 Best Movies You've Never Seen and film critic for CTV's Canada AM.





Cineplex | Empire | AMC | Alliance Atlantis | ATNY | Independent | Criterion

This week's new releases are highlighted in red.

Screen Times

THESE PAGES COVER MOVIE START TIMES FROM FRI., DEC. 12 TO THURS., DEC. 18. TIMES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

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OMNIMAX THEATRE SCIENCE WORLD
1455 Quebec St., 604-443-7443

The Alps (STC) Fri-Thu 12-2-4 Fri-Sat 8:30
Grand Canyon Adventure: River at Risk in 3D (STC) Fri-Thu 1 Sat 7:30
Journey Into Amazing Caves (STC) A.M. Fri-Thu 11 Fri 7:30
The Light Before Christmas (STC) Fri-Thu 3
Pulse: A Stomp Odyssey (STC) Sat-Sun 5

CN IMAX THEATRE
201-999 Canada Place, 604-682-4629

The IMAX Nutcracker (STC) Fri-Thu 1-8
The Polar Express: An IMAX 3D Experience (G) Fri-Thu 2-6-9
Santa vs. the Snowman (STC) Sat-Sun 4
Wild Ocean (G) Fri 12 Sat-Sun 12-5 Mon-Thu 12

DUNBAR THEATRE
4555 Dunbar Street, 604-222-2991

Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa (G) Sat-Sun 1:15-3:30
Twilight (PG) Fri-Thu 7-9:30

FIFTH AVENUE CINEMAS
2110 Burrard Street, 604-734-7469

The Boy in the Striped Pajamas (PG) Fri-Thu 2-4:40-7:15-9:15
I've Loved You So Long (French w/e.s.t.) (G) Fri-Thu 1:50-9:05
Milk (PG) Fri-Thu 1:20-4:10-7-9:40
Quantum of Solace (14A) Fri-Thu 1:40-4:30-7:10-9:30
Rachel Getting Married (PG) Fri-Mon 4:20-6:45 Tue-Thu 4:20
Slumdog Millionaire (14A) Fri-Thu 1:30-4-6:50-9:20

GRANVILLE
855 Granville St., 604-684-4000

JCVD (PG) Fri 7:20-9:40 Sat 4:25-7:20-9:40 Sun 1:40-9:40 Mon-Thu 7:20-9:40
Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa (G) Fri 7:10 Sat-Sun 1:35-4:10-7:10 Mon-Thu 7:10
Nutcracker (Ballet) (STC) Sat 1
Rachel Getting Married (PG) Fri 6:55 Sat-Sun 1:15-6:55 Mon-Thu 6:55
Repo! The Genetic Opera (STC) Fri 7-9:20 Sat-Sun 1:25-4:20-7-9:20 Mon-Thu 7-9:20
Synecdoche, New York (14A) Fri 6:50-9:35 Sat-Sun 1:10-3:55-6:50-9:35 Mon-Thu 6:50-9:35
Tell No One (14A) Fri 9:30 Sat-Sun 3:55-9:30 Mon-Thu 9:30
A Touch Of Spice (Greek w/e.s.t.) (STC) Fri-Thu 9:15
Who Is KK Downey? (14A) Fri 7:15-9:25 Sat-Sun 1:30-4-7:15-9:25 Mon-Thu 7:15-9:25
WWE: Armageddon (STC) Sun 4
Zack and Miri Make a Porno (18A) Fri 7:05-9:45 Sat-Sun 1:20-4:05-7:05-9:45 Mon-Thu 7:05-9:45

HOLLYWOOD THEATRE
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hollywoodtheatre.ca

Bottle Shock (PG) Fri 7:30 Sat-Sun 1:30-7:30 Mon-Thu 7:30
The Women (PG) Fri 9:30 Sat-Sun 3:30-9:30 Mon-Thu 9:30

OAKRIDGE
650 West 41st Ave., 604-263-1944

The Day the Earth Stood Still (STC) Dolby Stereo Digital Fri 7-9:40 Dolby Stereo Digital Sat-Sun 1:10-4:10-7-9:40 DTS Digital Mon 7-9:40 Dolby Stereo Digital Tue-Thu 7-9:40
Quantum of Solace (14A) DTS Digital Fri 7:10-9:45 DTS Digital Sat-Sun 1:30-4:20-7:10-9:45 Dolby Stereo Digital Mon 9:45 DTS Digital Tue-Thu 7:10-9:45
Twilight (PG) DTS Digital Fri 6:50-9:30 DTS Digital Sat-Sun 1-4-6:50-9:30 DTS Digital Mon-Thu 6:50-9:30

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Cartune Xprez: 2008 Amrcan Fall Tour (STC) Mon 7:30
Chile puede (STC) Fri 7:15
Fiesta Patria (STC) Tue 9:15
Garrincha: Lonely Star (STC) Sat 4
The King of Idiots (STC) Sun 7:15
LALIFF: Radio Corazon (STC) Sun 9:15
My Mother's Garden (STC) Wed 7:30
Our Father (STC) Sat 9:30
Scrambled Beer (STC) Tue 7:30
Sex With Love (STC) Sat 7:15
Song Sung Blue (STC) Thu 7:30
Tim Burton's The Nightmare Before Christmas (STC) Sun 1
Ugly Me (STC) Fri 9:10

PARK THEATRE
3440 Cambie Street, 604-876-2747

Australia (PG) Fri-Sun 3:10-6:30-9:45 Mon-Thu 4-7:30 5

RIDGE THEATRE
3131 Arbutus Street, 604-738-6311

The Nutcracker Ballet (STC) A.M. Sat 10
Saving Luna (G) Fri 4-7-9 Sat-Sun 2-4-7-9 Mon-Thu 4-7-9

RIO ON BROADWAY
1660 E. Broadway, 604-878-Film
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Quantum of Solace (14A) Fri 7:15-9:30 Sat-Sun 4:45-7:15-9:30 Mon-Thu 7:15-9:30

SCOTIABANK THEATRE VANCOUVER
900 Burrard St., 604-630-1407

Body of Lies (18A) Fri-Tue 12:20-3:40-7:05-10:15 Wed 12:20-3:40-10:15 Thu 12:20-3:40-7:05-10:15
Bolt (G) Fri-Thu 12-3:30-6:45-9:30
The Day the Earth Stood Still (STC) No Passes Fri-Thu 12:50-1:20-4-4:40-6:50-7:20-9:40-10:10
Milk (PG) Fri-Thu 12:10-3:20-6:45-10
Nutcracker/Casse-Noisette (STC) Sat 11
Quantum of Solace (14A) Fri-Thu 12:40-1:10-3:50-4:20-7:10-7:40-9:50-10:20
Role Models (14A) Fri-Thu 1:30-4:10-7:30-10:30
Twilight (PG) Fri-Thu 12:30-3:30-6:40-9:45

TINSELTOWN
International Village, 88 West Pender, 3rd floor, 604-806-0799
cinemark.com

Australia (PG) Fri-Thu 1:05-2:50-4:35-6:20-8:05-9:45
Changeling (14A) No Passes Fri-Thu 9:20
A Christmas Tale (PG) No Passes Fri-Thu 3:20-6:40-9:55
Delgo (PG) No Passes Fri-Thu 2:30-4:50-7:05
Four Christmases (PG) Fri-Sun 1-2:10-3:25-4:30-5:40-6:50-8-9:10 Mon 1-2:10-3:25-4:30-5:40-8-9:10 Tue 1-2:10-3:25-4:30-5:40-6:50-8-9:10 Wed-Thu 1-2:10-3:25-4:30-5:40-8-9:10
Frost/Nixon (PG) No Passes Fri-Wed 1:20-2:35-4:10-5:25-7:8:15-9:50 No Passes Thu 1:20-2:35-4:10-5:25-7-8:15-9:50-11:15
Nothing Like The Holidays (PG) No Passes Fri-Wed 2:25-4:45-7:15-9:40 No Passes Thu 2:25-4:45-7:15-9:40-12:05
Punisher: War Zone (18A) No Passes Fri-Thu 2:40-5:10-7:45-10:25
RocknRolla (14A) Fri-Thu 10:15
Seven Pounds (PG) No Passes Thu 12:01
Slumdog Millionaire (14A) No Passes Fri-Thu 1:50-4:40-7:30-10:20
Transporter 3 (14A) Fri-Wed 2:55-5:15-7:35-10 Thu 2:55-5:15-10

VANCITY THEATRE
Vancouver International Film Centre
1181 Seymour Street, 604-683-Film, vifc.org

Blue Gold: World Water Wars (STC) Fri 7 Sat 9 Sun 7 Mon 9 Tue 7 Wed 9 Thu 7
Flow: For Love of Water (STC) Fri 9 Sat 7 Sun 9 Mon 7 Tue 9 Wed 7 Thu 9

VAN EAST CINEMA
2290 Commercial Drive, 604-251-1313
vaneast.com

Rachel Getting Married (PG) Fri 7-9:15 Sat-Sun 4:45-7-9:15 Mon-Thu 7-9:15

NORTH SHORE

ESPLANADE 6
200 West Esplanade, 604-983-2762

Bolt in Disney Digital 3D (G) Dolby Stereo Digital Fri 7-9:25 Dolby Stereo Digital Sat-Sun 2-4:20-7-9:25 Dolby Stereo Digital Mon-Thu 7-9:25
Changeling (14A) Fri 6:40-9:35 Sat-Sun 12:45-3:40-6:40-9:35 Mon-Thu 6:40-9:35
Delgo (PG) Fri 6:45 Sat-Sun 1:30-4-6:45 Mon-Thu 6:45
Nutcracker (Ballet) (STC) Sat 1
Punisher: War Zone (18A) Fri 7:15-9:50 Sat-Sun 1:45-4:10-7:15-9:50 Mon-Thu 7:15-9:50
Quantum of Solace (14A) Fri 6:50-7:10-9:20-9:40 Sat 1:15-3:50-4:30-6:50-7:10-9:20-9:40 Sun 1-1:15-3:40-3:50-6:50-7:10-9:20-9:40 Mon-Thu 6:50-7:10-9:20-9:40
Role Models (14A) Fri-Thu 9:15

PARK & TILFORD
333 Brooksbank Ave., 604-985-3911

Australia (PG) Fri 7:30 Sat-Sun 12:10-3:50-7:30 Mon-Thu 7:30
The Day the Earth Stood Still (STC) No Passes Fri 6:40-7:20-9:20-10 No Passes Sat-Sun 12:20-12:50-3:10-3:40-6:40-7:20-9:20-10 No Passes Mon-Thu 6:40-7:20-9:20-10
Four Christmases (PG) Fri 6:50-9:50 Sat-Sun 12:40-3:20-6:50-9:50 Mon-Thu 6:50-9:50
Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa (G) Fri 7:10-9:40 Sat 2:50-5-7:10-9:40 Sun 12:30-2:50-5-7:10-9:40 Mon-Thu 7:10-9:40
Nutcracker/Casse-Noisette (STC) Sat 11
Twilight (PG) Fri 6:30-9:30 Sat-Sun 12-3-6:30-9:30 Mon-Thu 6:30-9:30

RICHMOND

RICHMOND CENTRE 6
6551 #3 Road, 604-273-7173

Bolt (G) Fri 4:20-7:05-9:35 Sat 1:35-4:20-7:05-9:35 Sun 1:35-4:20-7:05 Mon-Thu 4:20-7:05
The Day the Earth Stood Still (STC) No Passes Fri 4:30-7:10-9:45 No Passes Sat 1:45-4:30-7:10-9:45 No Passes Sun 1:45-4:30-7:10 No Passes Mon-Thu 4:30-7:10
Four Christmases (PG) Fri 4:40-7:15-9:40 Sat 1:55-4:40-7:15-9:40 Sun 1:55-4:40-7:15 Mon-Thu 4:40-7:15
Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa (G) Fri 4:35-6:55-9:30 Sat 1:50-4:35-6:55-9:30 Sun 1:50-4:35-6:55 Mon-Thu 4:35-6:55
Quantum of Solace (14A) Fri 4:25-7:20-9:55 Sat 1:40-4:25-7:20-9:55 Sun 1:40-4:25-7:20 Mon-Thu 4:25-7:20
Twilight (PG) Fri 4:15-7-9:50 Sat 1:30-4:15-7-9:50 Sun 1:30-4:15-7 Mon-Thu 4:15-7

SILVERCITY RIVERPORT
14211 Entertainment Way, 604-272-7280

Australia (PG) Fri-Thu 12:20-4:10-8-9
Bolt (G) Fri-Thu 12-1:10-2:30-4-4:50-7:15-9:50
Chakk de Phatte (In Punjabi) (PG) Fri-Thu 1:40-5:10-9
Changeling (14A) Fri-Thu 9:55
The Day the Earth Stood Still (STC) No Passes Fri-Thu 12:30-3:30-6:30-9:15 No Passes Fri-Thu 1:30-4:30-7:30-10:15
The Day the Earth Stood Still: The IMAX Experience (PG) No Passes Fri-Thu 1-4-7-9:45
Delgo (PG) Fri-Thu 1:05-3:35-6:35
Four Christmases (PG) Fri-Thu 1-3:55-6:50-9:30
Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa (G) Fri-Thu 12:35-3-5:15-7:50-10:05
Milk (PG) Fri-Thu 12:10-3:20-6:40-9:45
Nothing Like The Holidays (PG) Fri-Thu 12:55-3:40-7:05-9:35
Nutcracker/Casse-Noisette (STC) Sat 11
Punisher: War Zone (18A) Fri-Thu 1:45-4:45-7:55-10:30
Quantum of Solace (14A) Fri-Thu 1-4-6:45-7:20-9:40-10:20
Rab Ne Bana Di Jodi (Hindi w/e.s.t.) (STC) Fri-Thu 12:40-4:35-8:30
Role Models (14A) Fri-Thu 1:25-4:20-7:25
Transporter 3 (14A) Fri-Thu 1:15-4:35-7:35-10:25
Twilight (PG) Fri-Sat 12:30-1:30-3:45-4:30-7-7:40-10-10:35 Sun 12:30-1:30-4:30-7:40-10-10:35 Mon-Thu 12:30-1:30-3:45-4:30-7-7:40-10-10:35
WWE: Armageddon (STC) Sun 5

BURNABY

DOLPHIN CINEMAS
4555 E. Hastings St., 604-293-0332

Closed for Renovations

SILVERCITY METROPOLIS
4700 Kingsway Ave., 604-435-7474

Australia (PG) Fri-Thu 12:20-4:15-7:50
Bolt (G) Fri-Thu 12-2:30-5-7:30-9:50
The Day the Earth Stood Still (STC) No Passes Fri-Thu 12:05-3-7-9:45 No Passes Fri-Thu 12:40-3:45-7:30-10:10
Four Christmases (PG) Fri-Thu 12:10-3:15-7:10-10
Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa (G) Fri-Sat 12:35-3:35-7:05-10:05 Sun 12:35-3:35-10:05 Mon-Wed 12:35-3:35-7:05-10:05 Thu 12:35-3:35-10:05
Punisher: War Zone (18A) Fri-Thu 1-4:05-7:45-10:15
Quantum of Solace (14A) Fri-Thu 12:45-4-7:20-9:55
Transporter 3 (14A) Fri-Sat 12:30-3:20-7:15-10 Sun 12:30-7:15-10 Mon-Thu 12:30-3:20-7:15-10
Twilight (PG) Fri-Thu 12:15-3:10-6:55-9:40
WWE: Armageddon (STC) Sun 5

STATION SQUARE
220-6200 McKay Ave., 604-434-7711

Body of Lies (18A) Fri 4:35-7:20-9:55 Sat 1:40-4:35-7:20 Mon-Thu 4:35-7:20
Changeling (14A) Fri 4:30-7:15-10 Sat 1:35-4:30-7:15-10 Sun 1:35-4:30-7:15 Mon-Thu 4:30-7:15
Delgo (PG) Fri 4:40-7:10-9:45 Sat 1:50-4:40-7:10-9:45 Sun 1:50-4:40-7:10 Mon-Thu 4:40-7:10
High School Musical 3: Senior Year (G) Fri 4:45-7:05-9:50 Sat 1:55-4:45-7:05-9:50 Sun 1:55-4:45-7:05 Mon-Thu 4:45-7:05
Max Payne (14A) Fri 4:55-7:25-10:15 Sat 2-4:55-7:25-10:15 Sun 2-4:55-7:25 Mon-Thu 4:55-7:25
Nothing Like The Holidays (PG) Fri 4:50-7-10:05 Sat 1:45-4:50-7-10:05 Sun 1:45-4:50-7 Mon-Thu 4:50-7
Role Models (14A) Fri 5-7:30-10:10 Sat 2:05-5-7:30-10:10 Sun 2:05-5-7:30 Mon-Thu 5-7:30

NEW WEST/ COQUITLAM

SILVERCITY COQUITLAM
170 Schoolhouse Street, 604-523-2911

Australia (PG) Fri-Thu 12:35-2:30-4:25-6:25-8-10
Bolt (G) Fri-Thu 12:40-3:40-6:40-9:40 Fri-Thu 1:10-4:10-7:10-10:10
Changeling (14A) Fri-Thu 2:20-6:30-9:45
The Day the Earth Stood Still (STC) No Passes Fri-Thu 1-1:30-4-4:30-7-7:30-10-10:30
Delgo (PG) Fri-Thu 12:20-2:45-5-7:35
Four Christmases (PG) Fri-Thu 11:50-12:40-2:05-2:55-4:20-5:10-6:35-7:25-9:15-9:55
Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa (G) Fri-Thu 12-2:15-4:30-6:50-9:10
Milk (PG) Fri-Thu 12:50-3:50-6:50-9:50
Nothing Like The Holidays (PG) Fri-Thu 1:05-4:05-7:05-10:05
Nutcracker/Casse-Noisette (STC) Sat 11
Punisher: War Zone (18A) Fri-Thu 1:15-4:15-7:15-10:15
Quantum of Solace (14A) Fri-Thu 12:45-1:45-3:45-4:45-6:45-7:45-9:45-10:45
Role Models (14A) Fri-Thu 12:20-3:20-6:20-9:20
Transporter 3 (14A) Fri-Thu 1:40-4:40-7:40-10:40
Twilight (PG) Fri-Sat 12:30-1:20-3:30-4:20-6:30-7:20-9:30-10:20 Sun 12:30-1:20-4:20-7:20-9:30-10:20 Mon-Thu 12:30-1:20-3:30-4:20-6:30-7:20-9:30-10:20
WWE: Armageddon (STC) Sun 5

STUDIO 12 GUILDFORD
15051-101st Ave, Surrey, 604-581-1176

Australia (PG) Stadium Seating, Dolby Stereo Digital Fri-Thu 1:15-4:40-8:15
Bolt in Disney Digital 3D (G) Stadium Seating, Dolby Stereo Digital Fri-Thu 1:45-4:15-7-9:15
Chakk de Phatte (PG) Stadium Seating, Dolby Stereo Digital Fri-Thu 1:15-4:05-6:55-9:45
The Day the Earth Stood Still (STC) Stadium Seating, Dolby Stereo Digital Fri-Thu 1:30-2-4-4:30-7-7:25-9:25-9:50
Delgo (PG) Stadium Seating, Dolby Stereo Digital Fri-Thu 1:40-3:50-6:40
Four Christmases (PG) Stadium Seating, Dolby Stereo Digital Fri-Thu 1:25-3:55-6:50-9:10
Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa (G) Stadium Seating, Dolby Stereo Digital Fri-Thu 1:55-4:25-7:10
Nothing Like The Holidays (PG) Stadium Seating, Dolby Stereo Digital Fri-Thu 1:35-4:10-7:15-9:35
Punisher: War Zone (18A) Stadium Seating, Dolby Stereo Digital Fri-Thu 9:25
Quantum of Solace (14A) Stadium Seating, Dolby Stereo Digital Fri-Thu 1:50-4:20-7:05-9:40
Role Models (14A) Stadium Seating, Dolby Stereo Digital Fri-Thu 9:20
Transporter 3 (14A) Stadium Seating, Dolby Stereo Digital Fri-Sat 2:05-4:35-7:20-9:40 Stadium Seating, Dolby Stereo Digital Sun 2:05-9:40 Stadium Seating, Dolby Stereo Digital Mon-Thu 2:05-4:35-7:20-9:40
Twilight (PG) Stadium Seating, Dolby Stereo Digital Fri-Thu 1:20-4:05-6:45-9:30
WWE: Armageddon (STC) Stadium Seating Sun 5

RIALTO
1732-152nd Street, White Rock, 604-541-9527, criterionentheatres.com

Australia Fri 7:30 Sat-Sun 2-7:30 Mon-Thu 7:30
Four Christmases (PG) Fri 7-9 Sat-Sun 2:10-7-9 Mon-Thu 7-9

CRITERION 4 WHITE ROCK
2381 King George Highway, 604-531-7456, criterionentheatres.com

Bolt (G) Fri 7-9 Sat-Sun 2-7-9 Mon-Thu 7-9
The Day the Earth Stood Still (STC) Fri 7:30-9:40 Sat-Sun 7:30-9:40-2:30 Mon-Thu 7:30-9:40
Quantum of Solace (14A) Fri 7:20-9:35 Sat-Sun 2:20-7:20-9:35 Mon-Thu 7:20-9:35
Twilight (PG) Fri 7:10-9:30 Sat-Sun 2:10-7:10-9:30 Mon-Thu 7:10-9:30
Zack and Miri Make a Porno (18A) Fri-Thu 10:35

SURREY/WHITE ROCK/LANGLEY

CLOVA
5732-176th St., Surrey, 604-541-9527

Australia (PG) Fri-Thu 7

HOLLYWOOD 3 CINEMA
7125-138th Street, Surrey, 604-592-4441

Appaloosa (PG) Fri-Thu 8:45
Beverly Hills Chihuahua (G) Fri 4:30 Sat-Sun 12-4:30 Mon-Thu 4:30
Changeling (14A) Fri-Thu 8:30
High School Musical 3: Senior Year (G) Fri 4:30-6:40 Sat-Sun 12-2:10-4:30-6:40 Mon-Thu 4:30-6:40
Max Payne (14A) Fri 4:30-6:45-9 Sat-Sun 12-2:15-4:30-6:45-9 Mon-Thu 4:30-6:45-9
Role Models (14A) Fri 6:30 Sat-Sun 2-6:30 Mon-Thu 6:30

STRAWBERRY HILL GRANDE
12161-72nd Ave, Surrey, 604-501-9400

Australia (PG) Fri-Thu 12:30-4:10-7:45
Bolt (G) Fri-Thu 1-3:40-7:15-9:40
Chakk de Phatte (In Punjabi) (PG) Fri-Thu 12:20-3:50-7:30
The Day the Earth Stood Still (STC) No Passes Fri-Thu 1:20-4:30-7:20-10
Dostana (Hindi w/e.s.t.) (PG) Fri-Thu 12:40-4:15-7:35
Four Christmases (PG) Fri-Thu 1:40-4-7:10-9:30
Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa (G) Fri-Thu 12-2:20-4:40-7-9:10
Nutcracker/Casse-Noisette (STC) Sat 11
Punisher: War Zone (18A) Fri-Sat 4:25-9:20 Sun 9:20 Mon-Thu 4:25-9:20
Quantum of Solace (14A) Fri-Thu 1:30-4:35-7:25-10:10
Rab Ne Bana Di Jodi (Hindi w/e.s.t.) (STC) Fri-Thu 12:10-12:50-4:05-5-7:50-9
Transporter 3 (14A) Fri-Sat 1:50-6:50 Sun 1:50 Mon-Thu 1:50-6:50
Twilight (PG) Fri-Thu 1:10-4:20-7:05-9:50
WWE: Armageddon (STC) Sun 5

STUDIO 12 GUILDFORD

ITALIAN CULTURAL CENTRE SOCIETY

Sunday, December 14th

ICCC Children's Christmas Concert

Enjoy and celebrate the Holiday Season with the children from our Italian Language School! Come one, come all! From 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. in the Ballroom.

FREE ADMISSION. 3075 Slocan St. Vancouver, 604-430-3337, www.italianculturalcentre.ca

The bestselling albums at Amazon.ca
1. And Winter Came, Enya; **2.** Priests, The Priests; **3.** A Winter Symphony, Sarah Brightman; **4.** A Midwinter Night's Dream, Loreena McKennitt; **5.** Day And Age, The Killers. METRO NEWS SERVICES

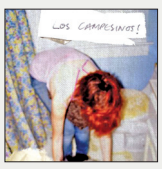
Music

Metro recommends

• **NEIL YOUNG, SUGAR MOUNTAIN:** Revisit 1968 and hear a playful, young Neil perform a solo set of future classics with coffee-house intimacy.

• **BRITNEY SPEARS, CIRCUS:** Dance club anthems and sassy love songs strut along with an electronic-pop sound that's not the same old BS.

• **LOS CAMPESINOS!, WE ARE BEAUTIFUL, WE ARE DOOMED:** Frenetic indie-pop with clever thematic twists, girl-guy harmonies and a heap of cheeky U.K. charm.



METRO NEWS SERVICES

Kiss working on new album

BANDS Kiss has reversed course and decided to hit the studio next year to record its first new album since 1998's Psycho Circus.

"It's going to be very much a vintage, classic, '70s KISS album without much regard to what's happened since then; it's back to the roots," said singer/guitarist Paul Stanley, who will produce the album. REUTERS

The Dears are reborn

Montreal band returns with new disc following internal meltdown

ROB MCMAHON
for Metro Canada

PHOTO HANDOUT

Missiles is the new album from Montreal's The Dears. They play the Vogue Theatre Dec. 21, 22 & 23.

What does a frontman do when faced with a band meltdown on the cusp of a new album?

If you're Murray Lightburn from The Dears, you pick up a video camera. The band's website now features The Gospel According to the Dears, a candid mini documentary chronicling the band's history. And making it wasn't easy — especially episode three.

"(At some points) people were firing off both barrels in my face … It was a little painful at times, but also cathartic, and put everything in its place," said Lightburn. "(The project) originated when I had a friend telling me maybe I should see some kind of counselor, because of how much the meltdown of the band affected me … Instead of seeing a counselor, I decided to try and understand the band."

Throughout the band's 13-year history, Lightburn has employed a tightly managed, product-oriented approach. Beginning with a blueprint, he works to fit everyone's parts in it, rather than "throwing things around." For example, he describes Missiles as a musical. Disclaimer is the prologue that dissolves into a scene shot after an explosion, before moving to the main conflict point at the end of Lights Off and then fading to the album's denouement. While this process results in rewarding music — the best Dears songs combine mythological storytelling with intricate prog-rock arrangements — past members also bring up stifled creativity and high demands.

"I'm a noted control freak, no question — I'll confess to that any time of day — but I think I've learned … that it's OK to just allow something to happen. To close your eyes, spread your arms, fall backwards and see what happens," he said. "It's such a stressful thing, trying to control something as intangible as art can be."

After the recent conflict, Lightburn began writing songs for a solo project, but as the work progressed, decided they were better expressed as Dears songs. Working with his wife and band partner Natalia Yanchak, he tried to chill out.

As heard in the relaxed saxophone solo of album opener Disclaimer, (before the song progresses into alternatively pleading and angry lyrics), the duo between Lighburn and Yanchak during Money Babies, and the ended outro of Saviour, the new songs work to avoid being overshadowed by the accompanying drama. Lightburn describes them as big plates of mutton and gristle: He hopes listeners take time to chew over them.

Yamagata's mountain inspiration

IAN NATHANSON
for Metro Canada

WARNER MUSIC PHOTO

Rachael Yamagata

Secluding herself on a family-owned wooded property in Woodstock, N.Y., singer-songwriter-pianist Rachael Yamagata found her muse during a run down a mountain. Upon completing the run back up, a new song came to mind — Elephants — that ultimately set the tone for her latest two-CD effort, Elephants … Teeth Sinking Into Heart.

"I was there to get over a thousand things that had happened to me, but mainly a relationship breakup that really floored me," the Virginia-born, Philadelphia-based 31-year-old tells Metro. "This guy I was seeing sent me this card with elephants on it — the idea being that elephants never forget — and the phrase in the card said something like, 'Now let's just forget our relationship and not give up hope.' I had that on my mind as I went for a run to re-energize."

The follow-up to Yamagata's 2004 full-length debut, Happenstance, initially had been completed in mid-2007. But a change in management and a subsequent drop from parent label RCA put Elephants … in limbo. (Warner eventually signed her.) That, combined with the aforementioned breakup, the death of her stepmom and a Dominican Republic vacation whereupon she damaged an eardrum while deep-sea diving drove Yamagata to yearn for practically no human contact by the time she arrived in Woodstock.

"Writing (about 160 songs) in the middle of the woods up at weird hours like 4 a.m. with all these weird circumstances going on mixed in with this weird isolation, brought out songs in a style I've never written before," Yamagata says.

After "about 80 attempts to sequence the album," she finally decided to issue a so-described 'record in two parts.' For the hushed 10-song first disc, Yamagata explains, "I wanted this extra-intimate, whispery vibe that got increasingly lush with the addition of strings and such — there was something very cinematic about the whole thing."

For the loud, up-tempo five-song second disc, she adds, "I had all these rock-driven songs, very biting, gritty lyrics but with a tongue-in-cheek sense of humour about it all, no sugarcoating whatsoever."

Between albums, Yamagata toured with Mandy Moore and, before that, appeared as backup singer for the likes of Moore, Ryan Adams, Bright Eyes, Rhett Miller, Jason Mraz and Ray LaMontagne, who joins Yamagata's on the new album's apropos-titled Duet. Her confessional-style material and husky, Fiona Apple-like vocals also were selected for various films and TV shows, including One Tree Hill, The L Word and The O.C., on which she made a cameo.

"I was really lucky with the previous record," she says. "The songs could be easily integrated in visuals because they have a universal theme that could apply to whatever was going on in a particular storyline."

You'd expect wines this highly awarded to be pricey.
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From $8.95 to $34.95, Jackson-Triggs has wines that are suited to any holiday gathering. Voted Best Canadian Winery an unprecedented 19 times in global competitions, most recently by *Wine Access* and the International Wine and Spirits Competition, London, England, you can be confident you're serving wines of exceptional quality and value. Discover them at BC Liquor Stores, private retailers and our winery in the Okanagan Valley.

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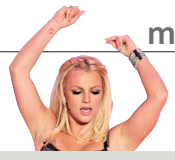
Please enjoy responsibly. jacksontriggswinery.com



Britney tops the charts
Britney Spears' new album debuted at No. 1 in the United States and five other countries, her label said, and promoters have added extra dates for the faded pop star's comeback world tour. **REUTERS**

Music

Show the animals you care with a BC SPCA *Paws*itive Gift!
www.PawsitiveGifts.ca

Unique holiday jingles

SoundCheck

Alan Cross
alan@ongoinghistory.com

The way I see it, there are three types of people when it comes to the music of the holidays. There are those who love every single note of Christmas cheer. Then there are those who grind their teeth to the roots every time they're assaulted with yet another rendition of The Little Drummer Boy. And there's a third group — people like me who like new and unusual seasonal songs.

Some pathological urge demands that I collect non-traditional Christmas music. Here's a sample of what you'll hear in my house this holiday season.

• **White Christmas, Stiff Little Fingers:** If we must hear this song, the default version is from Belfast's best punk rock band. Available on Punk Rock Christmas (Rhino).

• **Run, Rudolph, Run, Lemmy and friends:** Lemmy (he of Motorhead and the interesting facial growths) teams up with Dave Grohl (Foo Fighters) and Billy Gibbons (ZZ Top) to offer a new guttural version of a secular classic. The album from which it comes also features contributions from Tony Iommi (Black Sabbath) and Alice Cooper. Available on We Wish You a Metal Xmas and a Headbanging New Year (Armoury Records).

• **Sometimes You Have to Work on Christmas (Sometimes), Harvey Danger:** Poignant tribute to those who don't get the day off. Especially meaningful to those who work in movie theatres. Available on: 20th Century Masters: The Millennium Collection (Universal)

Jack Johnson
GETTY IMAGES

• **A Christmas Duel, The Hives featuring Cyndi Lauper:** A Christmas song that starts with the line "I bought no gifts this year/And I slept with your sister" is guaranteed to attract attention. And what's Cyndi Lauper doing here? Available free at the *hives-broadcastingservice.com*.

• **Someday at Christmas, Jack Johnson:** Just the kind of carol you'd expect from a mellow surfer dude from Hawaii. Available on Brushfire Holidays, Vol. 1: This Warm December (Brushfire).

• **Dad Threw Up on Christmas Day, Arrogant Worms:** Happy, big-band arrangement from Canadian comedy group. Not for the squeamish. Available on Christmas Turkey (Arrogant Worms indie label).

• **Stop Giving Me Crap for Christmas, Bobby Gaylor:** Standup comedian and former Roseanne writer expresses some universal frustrations. I don't remember where I found this. I think it was one of those errant MP3s that end up in my inbox from time to time.

• **Did I Make You Cry on Christmas? (Well, You Deserved It!), Sufjan Stevens:** Prolific indie songwriter approaches the holiday season with a certain, er, honesty. Available on: Songs for Christmas, Vol. 4: Joy! (Asthmatic Kitty).

The Ongoing History of New Music can be heard on stations across Canada. Read more at ongoinghistory.com and exploremusic.com.

Little Joy mixes musical eras

ROB MCMAHON
for Metro Canada

Little Joy describe themselves as one of the most laid-back bands around.

Formed in a non-descript dive bar in L.A. by musicians on a break from their day jobs, the whole project has the breezy air of Mai Tais under pink tropical sunsets.

"At first we didn't mean to do an album, but we thought we'd better look at what we had, and started recording … And now I'm sitting in a van eating a cup of noodles," said singer-guitarist Rodrigo Amarante. "In California, there's really not a lot of obligations, except fun and relaxation. I hope that comes out (in the album)."

After a chance encounter at a music festival a couple years ago, Amarante moved in with Strokes drummer Fabrizio Moretti (who plays many instruments in Little Joy) and his girlfriend, singer-songwriter Binki Shapiro. As Amarante, whose main gig is with Brazilian rockers Los Hermanos, describes it, Little Joy concocted songs using offbeat instruments like a ukulele-sounding tenor guitar, all in the shadow of "palm trees and beer."

Concert date

• Little Joy play the Plaza tonight.

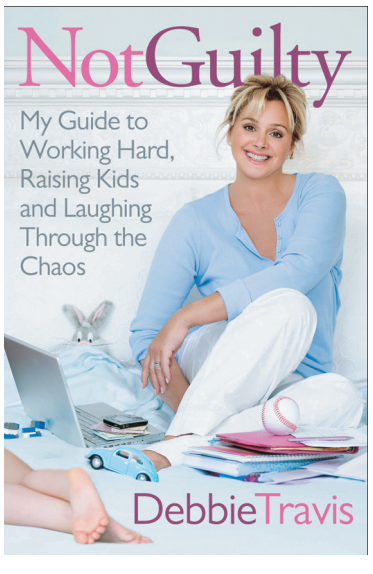
Recorded to low-fi equipment, the resulting self-titled album is cinematic in the sense of Beirut's music — but rather than an imagined Eastern European homeland, it recalls imagery from a sepia-toned, rum-soaked Caribbean holiday. While the band didn't turn to old films or Hemingway anecdotes for inspiration, Amarante said they did conceive of the songs as stories.

"We treated this group of songs like a movie that doesn't exist, except in our heads. That helped us develop some of the lyrics and characters in the songs," he said. "At other times we would use lyrics to (talk about) the past of a character in another (song)."

With a palette that touches on folk, reggae and Strokes-y garage rock, the band picked and chose arrangements from different musical eras. The tropical pop of The Next Time Around and Brand New Start express cheery takes on love, while Play the Part is a quiet acoustic strummer. The first English song Amarante ever wrote, How to Hang a Warhol, is more than a jokey autobiographical tune to friends back home. It also captures the band's philosophy.

"The lyrics came from a joke where people back in Brazil thought I got Americanized, so I wanted to write the most American thing I could," he said. "The song is about just doing it — having dreams and doing well, but at the same time accepting yourself and what you like to do."

HANDOUT
Little Joy concocted songs for their self-titled debut using offbeat instruments like a ukulele-sounding tenor guitar, all in the shadow of "palm trees and beer."



This Christmas, is TRUTH stranger than FICTION?

"Treat your kids like a paint job. It's all in the preparation. Take the time to sand and prime well and the results will be as good as perfect. Don't worry too much about the cracks or blotches – they just add character." —Debbie Travis

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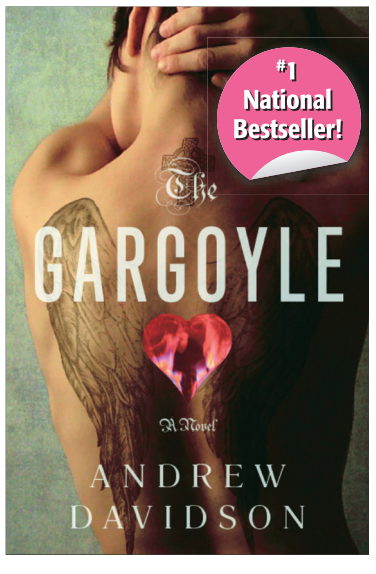

This Day In Music History — 2001

Dave Grohl and Krist Novoselic file a countersuit against Courtney Love. The case involves the release of Nirvana material. The suit is in response to an action Love filed earlier that claims Nirvana's contract with Universal Music is void. REUTERS

Music

Bon Jovi top touring act

Bon Jovi was the top touring act in 2008, just ahead of Bruce Springsteen & the E Street Band, according to sales data collected by Billboard.

Bon Jovi's Lost Highway trek through North America and Europe grossed $210.6 million US. Springsteen's Magic tour pulled in $204.5 million. The survey covers the period Nov. 14, 2007, through Nov. 11, 2008. Rounding out Billboard Boxscore's Top 10 were Madonna, with $162 million for the still-underway Sticky & Sweet tour, the Police which earned $150 million on the second leg of their reunion tour, Celine Dion who took in $91 million and Kenny Chesney with $86 million).

Others on the list were Neil Diamond who earned $81.2 million, the Spice Girls who netted $70 million, the Eagles with $56.6 million and Rascal Flatts ($55.8 million). REUTERS

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Barton to join cast of Ugly Betty: Report
Former The O.C. star Mischa Barton looks set to be returning to TV screens — the actress is reportedly in talks to join the cast of Ugly Betty. IMDB.COM

Television

Televised assisted suicide criticized

Documentary by Canadian filmmaker on British TV called 'irresponsible' by critics

Britain's Sky television was criticized this week for plans to screen the final moments of a terminally-ill man who chose to commit suicide.

The film of 59-year-old Craig Ewert's death in 2006 in a clinic in Switzerland is part of a Right to Die documentary made by Canadian filmmaker John Zaritsky and the first time British television has shown someone committing assisted suicide.

"If I don't go through with it, my choice is essentially to suffer, to inflict suffering on my family, and then die," Ewert says in the film, parts of which were shown on Sky News.

Sky was due to broadcast the full documentary Wednesday night.

With his wife Mary at his side, Ewert, who was partially paralyzed by motor-neurone disease, is shown at the Dignitas suicide clinic in Zurich drinking a mixture of sedatives and turning off his own ventilator.

Anti-euthanasia campaigners said the broadcast was irresponsible "euthanasia voyeurism," which would create a false impression of a growing demand for assisted suicide in Britain.

"This will only intensify the pressure felt by such people, whether real or imagined, to contemplate taking their lives for fear of being a burden upon loved ones, careers or a society that is short of resources," said campaign group Care Not Killing, an alliance of around 50 concerned organizations.

Writing in The Independent newspaper, Ewert's wife said her husband — an American-born university professor who lived in Yorkshire, northern England — had wanted his death to be shown to help allay peoples' fears about death.

"He was keen to have it shown because when death is hidden and private, people don't face their fears about it. They don't acknowledge that it is going to happen, they don't reflect on it they don't want to face it," Mary Ewert wrote.

"He wanted to remove a veil so that people could see how comfortably someone could die who — without this option of assisted suicide — maybe would have had a very painful death."

The film's Oscar-winning director Zaritsky told BBC radio he felt it was important to show the full process. Anything else, he said, would have given a "less than honest" view open "to charges that the death was unpleasant or cruel."

"By putting it out there in its entirety, people can judge for themselves," he said.

According to figures released last month, between 2001 and 2004, 91 percent of those who died with help from Dignitas were foreigners, mostly from Germany, France and Britain.

REUTERS

Desperate Housewives may add two seasons

SERIES Desperate Housewives in 2012?

Series creator Marc Cherry let slip Wednesday that he is in talks with ABC about continuing the hit comedy-drama for another two seasons.

"I started recently talks with (ABC Entertainment president) Steve McPherson and (ABC Studios president) Mark Pedowitz about continuing the show for a ninth season," Cherry was quoted saying at a cake-cutting ceremony for the show's 100th episode. "We're going to find a way to make it work."

"The five-year jump seems to have reinvigorated interest in the show, and the ratings are terrific."
Series creator Marc Cherry

The cast of Desperate Housewives, from left, Eva Longoria Parker, Felicity Huffman, Marcia Cross, Teri Hatcher and Nicollette Sheridan.

ABC confirmed the plan but stressed no deals have been made.

For the past year, Cherry had been saying publicly that he intended to set a firm end date for the series after seven seasons. "The five-year jump seems to have reinvigorated interest in the show, and the ratings are terrific," Cherry said.

REUTERS

Gay reality TV show in the works

PROJECT Showtime is developing a reality series documenting gay people coming out to friends and family.

The project is titled Way Out. In each episode, a closeted individual reveals their true sexual orientation during a group meeting.

Showtime has ordered a pilot presentation from Bryn Freedman, a former journalist and executive producer of A&E's Intervention, as part of its effort to bolster its unscripted slate.

REUTERS

30 Rock, Mad Men up for producer honours

KUDOS 30 Rock and Mad Men collected even more kudos this week.

The shows, which took home top series honors at this year's Emmys and earned Writers Guild Award nominations this week, are among the TV nominees for the 20th annual Producers Guild Awards.

30 Rock will vie for the Producer of the Year Award in Episodic Television — Comedy along with fellow NBC series The Office; two HBO shows, Curb Your Enthusiasm and Entourage; and Showtime's Weeds.

AMC's Mad Men was cited as a nominee for Producer of the Year in Episodic Television — Drama along with FX's Damages, Showtime's Dexter and a pair of ABC series: Boston Legal, which had its series finale this week, and Lost.

In the non-fiction category, two magazine shows — PBS' Frontline and CBS' 60 Minutes — will compete with Discovery Channel's Deadliest Catch, Bravo's Kathy Griffin: My Life on the D-List and Showtime's This American Life.

REUTERS

NBC PHOTO

Tina Fey and Alec Baldwin star in 30 Rock, which has been nominated for a Producer of the Year Award at the 20th annual Producers Guild Awards

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2 - 901 Lougheed Hwy.

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Rumoured role

Tori Spelling is reportedly in talks again to appear on 90210. Although nothing is official, Spelling's Donna Martin character may arrive for a couple of episodes in the spring, possibly for one of the shows that Jason Priestley will direct. **TVGUIDE.COM**

Television

What's Oprah's weight got to do with it?

IntelleVision

SOMETIMES AN ÉCLAIR IS JUST AN ÉCLAIR: There's a theory making the rounds that the current economic downturn is a good thing in disguise — that being shocked out of the complacent habits of prosperity and the social status quo is the ultimate form of "creative destruction," burning away out-of-date ideas and habits and forcing us to look at the world in a whole new way.

Sometimes, however, it's just an invitation for increasingly tenuous and absurd lunges at social diagnosis, such as a piece in Tina Brown's Daily Beast current affairs web magazine this week by writer and comic Jessi Klein. The subject at hand is Oprah Winfrey's recent weight gain, the subject of an apparently anguished confession in the recent issue of Winfrey's O magazine, which Klein sees as a physical reflection of the subprime mortgage meltdown and credit crunch behind our current economic insecurity.

"Oprah concludes that her latest chub-battle has led her to adjust her weight objective," Klein writes. "She's no longer striving to be thin, she says, but simply to balance health with giving herself 'the love and care' she needs. So 2009 finds Oprah and the rest of the country adjusting to a new resolve. None of us, no matter what the size of our wallets, can be perfect. But when we waver from our budgets, we'll be downsizing our indulgences. For Oprah, that might mean a cookie instead of a whole cake; for the rest of us, perhaps a movie instead of an Escalade."

It's at times like this that the tantalizing lure of metaphor — for writers especially — looks like epistemological crack, cheap, addictive and damaging. Oprah's weight gain is to be understood as one woman's caloric interpretation of social insecurity seeking solace in materialism; it's a sophomoric equation at best, one best discarded with undergrad English Lit essays. It's hard to compare the extra time Oprah might have spent at the snack table backstage with credit card debt and defaulted mortgages; Oprah paid for the food she's eaten, after all, and her decision to supersize herself by 40 lbs. wasn't facilitated by governments and banks underwriting fatty foods, and won't end in seizure and public auction of her waistline.

Klein seems to think that the cure for our widespread economic bingeing should be the prohibition of Escalades and "cashmere-iPoddy things that should have been off limits," and quotes Oprah's assessment that her overindulgence was "a love issue." Whatever imprudence might have motivated so much bad debt, love probably had less to do with it than woeful incomprehension of the concept of interest and the seriousness of the due date at the top of a bill.

"It's hard to compare the extra time Oprah might have spent at the snack table backstage with credit card debt and defaulted mortgages."

Rick McGinnis writes about music, movies, books and television, but not opera.

FRIDAY

VA	Vu	SC	C		7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00
primetime	251	308	3	CBC	Coronation St.	Jeopardy! (N)	Santa Is Coming to Town		Doctor Who "Journey's End"		CBC News: The National (N)		(:05) The Hour
	255	358	6	JOY	E News	The Insider	Smarter Than a 5th Grader?		Deal-No Deal	Deal-No Deal	20/20 (CC)		News (N)
	250	321	9	CTV	etalk (CC)	Hollywood	The Rankin Family Reunion		Supernanny "James Family"		Law & Order (CC)		News (N)
	252	336	11	GTV	Entertainment	ET Canada	90210 (CC)		Life "Canyon Flowers" (N)		NUMB3RS "Power" (CC)		News (N)
	256	389	12	VI	Instant Star	TMZ (N) (CC)	Wife Swap "Cooper/Kukta"		Don't Forget the Lyrics! (N)		Stargate SG-1 "Bounty"		News (CC)
	253	359	13	CITY	Law & Order: SVU		Songs of the Season		Lipstick Jungle (N) (CC)		Crusoe (CC)		EP Daily
	-	-	14	CW	Deal-No Deal	Deal-No Deal	Hates Chris	Hates Chris	Family Television Awards		Seinfeld	Seinfeld	Frasier (CC)
	289	381	15	CBS	Entertainment	The Insider	Frosty	Frosty	The Flight Before Christmas		NUMB3RS "Power" (CC)		News (N)
	287	379	16	NBC	Evening Mag.	Inside Edition	Songs of the Season		Lipstick Jungle (N) (CC)		Dateline NBC (CC)		News (N)
	288	380	21	ABC	Wheel-Fortune	Jeopardy! (N)	Wife Swap "Cooper/Kukta"		Supernanny "James Family"		20/20 (CC)		KOMO 4 News
	290	382	23	FOX	Two/Half Men	Two/Half Men	Smarter Than a 5th Grader?		Don't Forget the Lyrics! (N)		News (N)	Most Wanted	Family Guy
family sports news	502	390	26	NW	CBC News: the fifth estate		CBC News: The National (N)		CBC News: The National		CBC News: the fifth estate		National
	500	500	33	CNN	Anderson Cooper 360 (CC)				Larry King Live		Anderson Cooper 360 (CC)		Cooper 360
	407	419	22	RSP	FSN Pro Football Preview		Hockey	World Sport	Best Damn Sports Show		Sportsnet Connected (Live)		Sportsnet
	400	400	30	TSN	SportsCentre (Live) (CC)			Off the Record	Boxing Verno Phillips vs. Paul Williams. (CC)			Poker	SportsCentre
	552	543	25	YTV	Home Alone ★★★ (1990) Macaulay Culkin, Joe Pesci. (CC)				Smallville "Siren" (CC)		Dark Oracle	Mystery Hnt.	Mystery Hnt.
	555	545	50	TEL	Santa Claus	Bugs Bunny & Tweety Show		Wayside	Johnny Test	Futurama	Father	Chicken	Life's a Zoo
cable variety	268	354	5	KNO	Hockey: A People's History		The Royal (N) (CC)		Dalziel: Deadheads		Volcano: Life and Death of Malcolm Lowry		
	575	583	20	CMT	Karaoke Star "Finale"		Live & Up Front: Doc Walker		Grace of My Heart ★★ (1996) Illeana Douglas, Matt Dillon.				Dukes
	615	520	31	A&E	CSI: Miami "All In" (CC)		Criminal Minds (CC)		CSI: Miami "Grand Prix"		CSI: Miami "Blood Moon"		CSI: Miami
	521	560	34	TLC	Dress	Dress	What Not to Wear "Marianna"		Dress	Dress	What Not to Wear "Rebecca"		Real Simple
	616	522	39	SHO	The Best Years "Notorious"		The Guard "Waheguru" (CC)		Testees (CC)	Kenny-Spenny	Webdreams	Webdreams	Sin Cities
	294	650	47	TBS	Talladega Nights:		Funniest Movies-2008		Sex and-City	Sex and-City	Something's Gotta Give ★★★ (2003) (CC)		
	603	561	52	FN	Diner, Drive-In	Diner, Drive-In	Ace of Cakes	Ace of Cakes	Challenge "Princess Cakes"		Chef Abroad	The Wild Chef	Diner, Drive-In
	320	621	60	CEN	Sanctuary "Warriors" (N)		Botched (2007) Stephen Dorff. Premiere. (CC)			Penguins	Ocean's Thirteen ★★★ (2007) (CC)		
	581	566	101	MTV	The Hills	The Hills	After Show	Girls-Latitude	Super Sweet	Super Sweet	The Hills	The Hills	Made (CC)

12/12/08

SATURDAY

VA	Vu	SC	C		7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00
primetime	251	308	3	CBC	NHL Hockey Vancouver Canucks at Edmonton Oilers. (Live) (CC)					HNIC -- After Hours		News (CC)	HNIC Replay
	255	358	6	JOY	E News	The Soup	Soup Presents	Behind	Surviving Christmas ★ (2004) Ben Affleck, James Gandolfini.				E News
	250	321	9	CTV	W-FIVE-Peace Warrior		Last Exit (2006) Kathleen Robertson, Andrea Roth. (CC) (DVS)				Law & Order: SVU		News (N)
	252	336	11	GTV	Billy Graham Special (N)		Doc Nancy is mugged. (CC)		Painkiller Jane "Lauren Gray"		Kenny-Spenny	Kenny-Spenny	News (N)
	256	389	12	VI	New Canoe	Island Week	The Road to Avonlea		Kool Countdown (CC)		Comedy Now	Comedy Inc.	Bravo! Fact
	253	359	13	CITY	Survivorman (CC)		Crusoe "Sacrifice" (CC)		Out of Sync (2000, Drama) Gail O'Grady, Kari Wuhrer. (CC)				Role
	-	-	14	CW	CSI: NY "Corporate Warriors"		Boston Legal (CC)		Boston Legal "Nuts" (CC)		CSI: NY (CC)		CSI: Miami
	289	381	15	CBS	Paid Program	Paid Program	Eleventh Hour "Cardiac"		48 Hours-Boot Camp		48 Hours Mystery (N) (CC)		News (N)
	287	379	16	NBC	Backroads	Inside Edition	It's a Wonderful Life ★★★★ (1946, Comedy-Drama) James Stewart, Donna Reed. (CC)						News (N)
	288	380	21	ABC	Wheel-Fortune	Jeopardy!	Funniest Home Videos		Surviving Christmas ★ (2004) Ben Affleck, James Gandolfini.				KOMO 4 News
	290	382	23	FOX	Two/Half Men	Two/Half Men	Cops (N) (PA)	Cops (CC)	America's Most Wanted		News (N)	Most Wanted	MADtv (N)
family sports news	502	390	26	NW	Doc Zone (CC)		Sat. Report	Weekend	Sat. Report	Mansbridge	Doc Zone (CC)		Sat. Report
	500	500	33	CNN	D.L. Hughley-News		Special Investigations		Larry King Live		D.L. Hughley-News		Investigations
	407	419	22	RSP	(6:00) The Ultimate Fighter		Sportsnet Connected (Live)		Saturday Night Poker		Sportsnet Connected (Live)		Ult. Fighter
	400	400	30	TSN	SportsCentre (Live) (CC)			PGA Tour Golf Merrill Lynch Shootout -- Second Round.				Auto Racing	SportsCentre
	552	543	25	YTV	A Flintstones Christmas Carol			He-Man, She-Ra Christmas		Invader Zim	Ren & Stimpy	Dark Oracle	Mystery Hnt.
	555	545	50	TEL	Johnny Test	Looney Tunes Christmas		Wayside	Johnny Test	Futurama	Sky Captain and the World of Tomorrow (CC)		
cable variety	268	354	5	KNO	National Geographic Specials		Heartbeat (CC)		Midsomer Murders Investigating an apparent suicide. (N)				Montreal Jazz
	575	583	20	CMT	(6:00) The Sons of Mistletoe		Grand Ole Opry Live		The Sons of Mistletoe (2001, Drama) Roma Downey.				Christmas
	615	520	31	A&E	The Sopranos (CC)		The Sopranos (CC)		CSI: Miami "Whacked" (CC)		CSI: Miami "10-7" (CC)		The Sopranos
	521	560	34	TLC	Trading Spaces (N) (CC)		Crazy Christmas Lights (CC)		Property Ladder (CC)		Trading Spaces (CC)		Little People
	616	522	39	SHO	About a Girl	Kink in Hair	Recipe for a Perfect Christmas (2005) Christine Baranski.				The Descent ★★★ (2005, Horror) Premiere.		
	294	650	47	TBS	Anchorman: The Legend of Ron Burgundy ★★ (2004) (CC)				Guess Who ★★ (2005) Bernie Mac, Ashton Kutcher. (CC)				Lot Like Love
	603	561	52	FN	Kitchen Nightmares (CC)		The F Word (CC)		Challenge (CC)		Top Chef (CC)		Nightmares
	320	621	60	CEN	(5:55) Atonement ★★★ (CC)		Lost Boys: The Tribe (2008) Tad Hilgenbrinck.				(:45) Fast Food Nation ★★★ (2006) Greg Kinnear. (CC)		
	581	566	101	MTV	Cribs (CC)	Cribs (CC)	Cribs (CC)	Cribs (CC)	Cribs (CC)	Cribs (CC)	MTV Live	MTV News	After

12/13/08

SUNDAY

VA	Vu	SC	C		7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00
primetime	251	308	3	CBC	Red-Nosed Reindeer		The Polar Express ★★★ (2004) Voices of Tom Hanks. (CC)				CBC News: Sunday Night (N)		News (CC)
	255	358	6	JOY	Mysteries	Mysteries	Extreme Makeover: Home		Recipe for a Perfect Christmas (2005) Christine Baranski.				News (N)
	250	321	9	CTV	Anne of Green Gables: A New Beginning (2008) Shirley MacLaine. Premiere. (CC) (DVS)						CSI: NY (CC)		News (N)
	252	336	11	GTV	16:9 Picture	The Simpsons	Survivor: Gabon (Season Finale) (N) (CC)				Survivor: Gabon "Reunion"		News (N)
	256	389	12	VI	Funniest Home Videos		Gossip Girl (CC)		Deck the Halls ★ (2006, Comedy) Danny DeVito. (CC) (DVS)				New Canoe
	253	359	13	CITY	Two-Half Men	Two/Half Men	Friends (CC)	Friends (CC)	Friends (CC)	Friends (CC)	Stylista (CC)		Role
	-	-	14	CW	Jericho "Four Horsemen"		Spaceballs ★★ (1987, Comedy) Mel Brooks, John Candy.				Seinfeld	Seinfeld	Cold Case
	289	381	15	CBS	60 Minutes (CC)		Survivor: Gabon (Season Finale) (N) (CC)				Survivor: Gabon "Reunion"		News (N)
	287	379	16	NBC	NFL Football: Giants at Cowboys			M. Holmgren	Dateline NBC (CC)		Law & Order: Criminal Intent		News (N)
	288	380	21	ABC	Funniest Home Videos		The Santa Clause 2 ★★ (2002, Comedy) Tim Allen. (CC)				Desperate Housewives (CC)		KOMO 4 News
	290	382	23	FOX	American Dad	American Dad	The Simpsons	King of Hill	Family Guy	American Dad	News (N)	Q It Up Sports	House (CC)
family sports news	502	390	26	NW	Charles Other Mistress (N)		Royal Rivals? Charles, William		CBC News: Sunday Night		Charles Other Mistress (CC)		Royal Rivals?
	500	500	33	CNN	D.L. Hughley-News		Special Investigations		Larry King Live		D.L. Hughley-News		Investigations
	407	419	22	RSP	NHL Hockey Florida Panthers at Vancouver Canucks. (Subject to Blackout)					Canucks	Sportsnet Connected (Live)		Ult. Fighter
	400	400	30	TSN	NFL Football: Giants at Cowboys			SportsCentre (Live) (CC)		PGA Tour Golf: Merrill Lynch Shootout			SportsCentre
	552	543	25	YTV	Charlie Brown	Flintstones	(:10) A Flintstone Christmas		(:15) ALF	(:45) ALF	(:15) Falcon Beach (CC)		Mystery Hnt.
	555	545	50	TEL	George	Fat Albert	Scooby-Doo	Wayside	Johnny Test	Futurama	A Scanner Darkly ★★★ (2006, Action) (CC)		
cable variety	268	354	5	KNO	National Geographic (CC)		Doc Martin (CC)		The Whistleblowers (CC)		Dalziel: Deadheads		Montreal Jazz
	575	583	20	CMT	Tara Oram's Christmas Carol		CMT's Greatest "1997"		Coal Miner's Daughter ★★★ (1980) Sissy Spacek, Tommy Lee Jones.				
	615	520	31	A&E	CSI: Miami "Just Murdered"		CSI: Miami "Burned" (CC)		CSI: Miami "Three-Way"		CSI: Miami "Rush" (CC)		CSI: Miami
	521	560	34	TLC	Paralyzed and Pregnant		I Didn't Know I Was Pregnant		Mermaid Girl (CC)		Paralyzed and Pregnant		Pregnant
	616	522	39	SHO	The Guard "The Beacon"		The Christmas Choir (2008, Drama) Jason Gedrick. Premiere.				Lady in the Water ★★ (2006) Paul Giamatti.		
	294	650	47	TBS	Talladega Nights: The Ballad of Ricky Bobby ★★ (2006)				National Security ★★ (2003) (PA) Martin Lawrence. (CC)				Beverly-Ninja
	603	561	52	FN	Jamie at Home Christmas		Chef School	At the Table	Challenge (CC)		Iron Chef America (CC)		Jamie at
	320	621	60	CEN	The Hoax ★★★ (2006) Richard Gere, Alfred Molina. (CC)				Dexter (Season Finale) (N)		The Reaping ★ (2007) Hilary Swank. (CC)		
	581	566	101	MTV	Cribs (CC)	Cribs (CC)	MTV Live	Girls-Latitude	Made Hip hop dancer. (CC)		Cribs (CC)	Cribs (CC)	After Show

12/14/08

Christmas TV begins

A Muppets Christmas: Letters To Santa

Air date: Dec. 17
Network: CTV

Whoopi Goldberg, Uma Thurman, Richard Griffiths and Jane Krakowski keep up the Muppets tradition of idiosyncratic guest choices on the latest holiday special from the people who brought you Peter Sellers singing Cigarettes, Whisky And Wild, Wild Women on the Muppet Show.

The Best Of The Hills Parodies

Air date: Saturday
Network: MTV

Making fun of The Hills is actually more fun than watching the thing, a fact that gets celebrated with this hour-long special collecting Hills take-offs — there are obviously more than enough.

Rick's TVPicks

Mall Santas

Air date: Dec. 18
Network: Global

It's not Miracle on 34th Street, but it's not Bad Santa, either. The world of the Mall Santa gets explored with three pro Santas whose lives might not exactly be Christmas every day.

RICK MCGINNIS/METRO CANADA

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Rachel Wood heeds Spidey's call

Evan Rachel Wood is headed for the Broadway stage after reportedly landing the leading lady role in the musical adaptation of box-office smash Spider-man. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Going Out

The economy is slowing, so courses are filling fast.

There's still time to apply for courses starting January 5.

Accounting	Computer Science	Linguistics
Anthropology	Co-op Education	Mandarin
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Art History	Criminology	Marketing
Asian Studies	Economics	Philosophy
Biology	English	Physics
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Metro's 7th Heaven: Metro taps what's hot right now

1 Heath Ledger

Late actor Heath Ledger is garnering attention again for his work as the Joker in The Dark Knight, fresh out on DVD. He's been posthumously named best actor by the Australian Film Institute and best supporting actor by the Washington D.C. Area Film Critics Association.

Heath Ledger

America's Next Top Model judge Nigel Barker, right.

2 Hollywood baby boom

The result of spring fever, perhaps? A bevy of celebrities announced new arrivals this week: Eric Mabius (boy), America's Next Top Model judge Nigel Barker (girl), Amy Jo Johnson (girl) and Jonny Lee Miller (boy).

3 Grey's Anatomy

The medical show has spawned off-set drama, with Brooke Smith, who played Dr. Erica Hahn, saying there are no hard feelings after being booted off the show, and now rumours that T.R. Knight is looking to leave.

Brooke Smith

4 The cape jacket

Stars like singer Kylie Minogue and actress Leighton Meester are wrapping up in sleeveless, hooded jackets, with beige and blue being the colours of choice, femalefirst.co.uk reports. The cape combines the warmth of a cardigan with the smart silhouette of a jacket.

5 Elisha Cuthbert

Actress Elisha Cuthbert has so far taken the high road by remaining mum on comments made by her ex, Dallas Stars Sean Avery. He referred to Cuthbert as "my sloppy seconds" in a TV interview while poking fun at rival and Cuthbert's current flame, Dion Phaneuf.

Elisha Cuthbert

6 Kate Winslet

Oscar-nominated actress Kate Winslet is back on the big screen to show off her acting chops in The Reader and Revolutionary Road.

7 New Year's Eve

No plans? Head to New York to see the Jonas Brothers, Taylor Swift and Lionel Richie ring in 2009 on Dick Clark's New Year's Rockin' Eve.

Mix of Six

HOT & HAPPENING WEEKEND EVENTS

Goh Ballet presents The Nutcracker

Friday 7 p.m. Saturday 7 p.m.
Michael J. Fox Theatre, Burnaby

The Goh Ballet is a highly respected training institute, known as one of Canada's top ballet schools. They will be performing the holiday favourite The Nutcracker. Tickets are $28 at Goh Ballet, 2345 Main St., Vancouver.

The Vancouver Symphony Orchestra Traditional Christmas

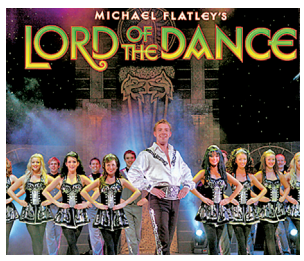
Sunday 4 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.
Bell Performing Arts Centre, Surrey

This season, the VSO's Assistant Conductor Evan Mitchell leads the orchestra with carols traditionally associated with Christmas, and audience sing-alongs. Tickets are $34 available by phone at 604-876-3434 or online at vancouversymphony.ca

Michael Flatley's Lord of the Dance

Saturday 3 p.m. and 8 p.m.
Sunday 2 p.m.
The Centre In Vancouver For Performing Arts

Based on Irish folklore, this tale of good vs. evil is expressed through dance. The show combines precision dancing, music, lighting and pyrotechnics.



Pacific Ice 2008 Annual Synchronized Skating Christmas Gala

Saturday, 1:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.
South Surrey Arena

More than 1,000 are expected as 350 skaters on 23 teams from throughout B.C. and Washington State will debut their 2009 competitive programs. The gala will support the Surrey Food Bank. General admission is by donation of non-perishable food items.

:: Art :: Image :: Party ::

Saturday 9 p.m.
644 Seymour St., Vancouver

The Art Project is having its third gallery show, selling all types of art. The show is being held at the Fall Gallery and is $10 at the door, with proceeds going to the Empty Stocking Fund. Event will be DJ-ed and licensed.

Olympic Oval opens to the public

Friday at 7:20 and 8:50 p.m., Saturday 12:50, 3:20, 5:15 and 6:30 p.m.

Free, 45-minute public skating sessions are being held today and tomorrow at the Olympic Oval in Richmond. It's a chance to skate on the same ice our athletes will compete on in 2010.

GlobalStyle

Kenya Hunt

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Taylor Hanson's wife gives birth to a son
Taylor Hanson, the middle brother of the rock trio Hanson, and his wife Natalie welcomed a son, Viggo Moriah, on Tuesday in Tulsa, Okla. **PEOPLE.COM**

Celebrity Buzz

Paltrow works on marriage

RELATIONSHIPS Gwyneth Paltrow will snub Christmas in her native America for the sake of her marriage to Coldplay rocker Chris Martin, according to reports.

Speculation about the state of their relationship mounted after Martin was pictured leaving the family's London home alone on Friday, the day of their fifth wedding anniversary.

But the actress is reportedly desperate to make her marriage work, and is sticking by her husband in London rather than spending the holidays with her family in the U.S.

"Gwyneth says she's totally fine. She's used the phrase 'perfectly happy' a bunch of times, and refuses to read any of the tabloid tales to the contrary," a source tells the New York Daily News.

The insider insists Paltrow is "staying overseas until the holidays are over," and is "trying to make their marriage better."

However, reports also allege Paltrow is keen to follow in the footsteps of her newly single friend, pop star Madonna, who announced she was divorcing husband Guy Ritchie in October.

"Gwyneth has the Madonna bug ... bad," the source adds. "It's eerie. Gwyneth acts normally until Madonna comes around, and then Gwyn is all about Madonna, all the time. Madge has even introduced Gwyneth to all her friends."

Representatives for Paltrow and Madonna both denied the reports, with the Oscar-winner's representative insisting the claims were "complete nonsense."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Aniston is amused

PEOPLE Jennifer Aniston has poked fun at the constant media interest in her relationship with ex-husband Brad Pitt and his partner Angelina Jolie, likening the trio to an "insane Bermuda triangle," imdb.com reports.

Speculation surrounding the actress' supposed rivalry with Jolie reached boiling point following Aniston's remarks to U.S. Vogue magazine in October, in which she branded Jolie "uncool."

The comments came after Jolie admitted she had fallen in love with Pitt while making 2005's Mr. and Mrs. Smith — when he was still married to Aniston.

But in a new interview with America's GQ magazine, in which Aniston poses naked apart from a men's tie, the star admits she finds the whole situation amusing.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Drew linked to Jason Segel

DATING Drew Barrymore has sparked reports she's dating funnyman Jason Segel, five months after ending her year-long romance with actor Justin Long, imdb.com reports.

The actress split from Long in July and has most recently been linked to Gossip Girl star Ed Westwick. But Barrymore has reportedly moved on again with the How I Met Your Mother star Segel, after the pair were allegedly spotted getting cosy at Los Angeles' Chateau Marmont on Nov. 28.

"Drew was all over Jason, rubbing him and kissing his face. He was on Cloud 9," a source tells Star magazine.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Adams details proposal

MARRIAGE Actress Amy Adams came close to sabotaging her fiance's marriage proposal, because she was in a bad mood, imdb.com reports.

Adams announced her engagement to her artist boyfriend of six years, Darren Le Gallo, back in July. But she didn't reveal how an uncharacteristic bout of diva behaviour almost ruined the whole occasion.

"He had something big and dramatic planned," she says. "He was going to take me out to a really nice dinner and then take me to the top of the Empire State Building. He's scared of heights so he thought that would be significant. But I completely ruined it by saying I wanted to go see a play instead of going to dinner ... He proposed to me in Central Park in a carriage."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Pitt admits early love with Jolie

RELATIONSHIPS Even though we all assumed it was true, Brad Pitt openly admits in the new issue of Rolling Stone that he "fell in love" with Angelina Jolie while he was still with Jennifer Aniston, popeater.com reports.

It's the same reason Mr. & Mrs. Smith tops as his favourite movie of all time, he said. "(Angelina) is not only the woman I love, but one of the people on this planet who I have the greatest respect for. I think she's as honorable as anyone I've ever met."

GETTY IMAGES PHOTOS

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Jessica wants wedding?

FAMILY Jessica Simpson reportedly wants to "get married in Texas in the summer and get pregnant soon after," femalefirst.co.uk reports.

The singer, who is dating football star Tony Romo, is said to be desperate to tie the knot and start her family, after seeing her younger sister Ashlee give birth to her own son Bronx Mowgli last month.

"Jessica recently sat Tony down for a baby talk," a friend of Jessica's told In Touch Weekly magazine. "Unlike Ashlee, Jessica doesn't want to get pregnant and then get married. She's a little more traditional, so she'd like to marry Tony first and then get pregnant, ideally on their honeymoon. She wants to get engaged in early 2009, married in Texas in the summer and get pregnant soon after."

It was recently revealed Jessica is "convinced" Dallas Cowboys star Romo is going to propose to her over Christmas.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Cate carries nuptial regret

PEOPLE Cate Blanchett regrets her wedding day, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

The actress, who married playwright Andrew Upton 11 years ago, would love to relive the special day because she has no photographs to remember it by.

"The only moment of my life I would possibly recapture is getting remarried again because we didn't take any photographs," Blanchett says.

"We didn't have any money at the time and we couldn't afford a photographer."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Tyler dating Bing: report

DATING Actress Liv Tyler has found love with model/actress Elizabeth Hurley's multimillionaire ex-boyfriend Steve Bing, according to tabloid reports.

Tyler, 31 who has been single since splitting with husband Royston Langdon earlier this year, was reportedly spotted enjoying a romantic meal with movie producer Bing in Los Angeles on Nov. 30, imdb.com reports.

According to Star magazine, Bing — the father of Hurley's six-year-old son Damian — has been pursuing Tyler for some time.

"She was determined to make a good impression," a source tells Star magazine. "They were laughing and smiling throughout the meal, which lasted two hours."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

The Weather Network
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Today: Rain and snow 90% 3° / -2°

Saturday: Variable 3° / -4°

Sunday: Mainly sunny -2° / -7°

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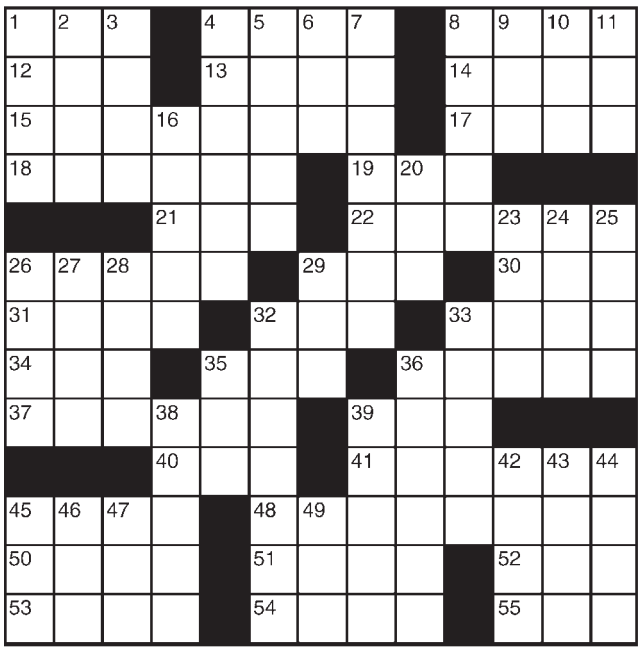
Take Five



Crossword across

1 Standard score
4 Medicos
8 Benefit
12 A mean Amin
13 Maze goal
14 Stop up
15 Nickname for football's George Halas
17 Hodgepodge
18 High-IQ sort
19 Wall St. debut
21 Caviar base
22 Hit repeatedly
26 Sacrifice site
29 Shriner's chapeau
30 Before
31 U.K. conservative
32 Seafood selection
33 Soft cheese
34 Harem room
35 Grow
36 Ship of the desert
37 Apple variety
39 Book-spine abbr.
40 Literary collection
41 Fleet
45 Cereal choice
48 Litter member
50 Indonesian island
51 Cupid's alias
52 2-Down's companion
53 Stylish
54 Paddock parent
55 Homer's neighbor Flanders

Crossword down

1 Knight's backup
2 Leading man?
3 Philbin co-host
4 Credit card user
5 Daisy variety
6 U.S. spy org.
7 Like some shirts
8 Ice cream utensil
9 Every iota
10 Japanese pond fish
11 Diva's problem
16 Splendid setup
20 Dispensable candy
23 Salon request
24 Ontario's neighbor
25 Stagger
26 Having surmounted
27 California city
28 Snare
29 A clever person
32 Hors d'oeuvres
33 Mild
35 Victory
36 Bit part in a whodunit
38 "War of the Worlds" effect
39 Smoke or fog
42 Mideast gulf
43 Peace symbol
44 On in years
45 English channel?
46 "Go, team!"
47 "The Greatest"
49 Spoon-bender Geller

Sudoku

HOW TO PLAY: Digits 1 through 9 will appear once in each zone – one zone is an outlined 3x3 grid within the larger puzzle grid. There are nine zones in the puzzle. Do not enter a digit into a box if it already appears elsewhere in the same zone, row across or column down the entire puzzle.

			1		5			
	5						7	
7	1	2				5	8	3
		8	5		2	9		
4								6
		3	6		7	4		
8	4	6				2	9	1
	9						5	
			8		9			

PREVIOUS DAY'S CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU ANSWERS:

H	E	L	D	■	S	A	L	T	■	P	R	O
O	B	O	E	■	O	B	E	Y	■	O	I	L
P	O	R	C	E	L	A	I	N	■	R	D	A
I	N	D	I	G	O	■	■	A	S	P	E	N
■	■	■	D	O	■	P	I	N	T	O	■	■
D	O	P	E	■	S	O	B	■	Y	I	P	S
O	N	O	■	■	O	R	E	■	■	S	O	P
G	E	R	M	■	A	C	T	■	Z	E	T	A
■	■	R	A	L	P	H	■	A	E	■	■	■
C	H	I	C	O	■	■	A	R	R	E	S	T
R	I	D	■	P	O	R	T	F	O	L	I	O
E	R	G	■	E	C	H	O	■	E	B	B	S
W	E	E	■	S	T	O	P	■	S	A	S	S

2	3	4	1	8	7	5	9	6
6	7	1	5	2	9	3	8	4
5	9	8	6	4	3	1	2	7
7	4	3	2	5	1	8	6	9
1	2	9	8	7	6	4	5	3
8	6	5	9	3	4	2	7	1
3	1	2	7	6	8	9	4	5
9	8	7	4	1	5	6	3	2
4	5	6	3	9	2	7	1	8

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SUDOKU SOLVE TIME:

Under 13 min .....Genius
13-17 min.....Scholar
17-21 min .....Smart
21-25 min .....Not bad
25+ min.....Keep practising

Metro Recipe of the Day

Tuna Provençale on a Baguette

INGREDIENTS:

2 large tomatoes, peeled and chopped
5 black olives (not oil-packed), pitted and finely chopped
1 baguette, about 24 in. (60 cm) long
2 tbsp (25 mL) extra virgin olive oil
1 large onion
1 large green pepper
2 cans (170 g) tuna in water, drained
2 tbsp (25 mL) white wine vinegar
2 garlic cloves, finely chopped

METHOD:

1. Mix tomatoes and olives in a medium bowl, and then let stand until juicy, about 15 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, cut baguette almost in half lengthwise (do not slice completely through). Open baguette like a book, being careful not to separate bread. Pull out about 1/2 cup (125 mL) of the soft centre with your hands. Using 1/2 tbsp (7 mL) oil, brush cut sides of the bread. Then spread on tomato mixture and any juices that have collected in the bowl.
3. Cut onion in half through stem end, then cut crosswise into thin semicircles. Cut pepper in half, then crosswise into thin semicircles. Layer onion, green pepper and tuna over tomato mixture. Whisk vinegar, garlic and remaining oil in a small bowl. Drizzle over tuna.
4. Wrap stuffed baguette tightly in plastic wrap. Weigh down with a heavy frying pan and let stand at room temperature until the ingredients have soaked into bread, 30 minutes. Cut diagonally into 4 equal pieces before serving.

SERVES 4

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Horoscopes

AVATAR VENUS

ARIES
MARCH 21-APRIL 20
A trustworthy person has remarkable news. A disturbance can produce a warning. You'll want to escape from a weird dilemma.

TAURUS
APRIL 21-MAY 21
Reorganize a sluggish system right away. A threat will jog somebody's memory. You can get ahead by leaving a sad place.

GEMINI
MAY 22-JUNE 21
An amiable manner influences a realist. Don't count your blessings in public. You shouldn't push optimism to a cynical person.

CANCER
JUNE 22-JULY 22
A prosperous guy needs medical attention. Shabbiness will not be acceptable to a lady. Don't be a fool when crossing a street.

LEO
JULY 23-AUG 23
Check your documents carefully. A magnificent man takes the other side in a conflict. Difficulties arise when you are too aggressive.

VIRGO
AUG 24-SEPT 22
Time passes slowly while awaiting a disclosure. A decent man gives a warning about unreliability. An alarmist rouses the neighbourhood.

LIBRA
SEPT 23-OCT 23
A disagreement about benefits will lead to teasing. A friend will happily agree to make changes. A separation leads to a breakthrough.

SCORPIO
OCT 24-NOV 22
Show your support when a relationship begins. An eccentric person is making a big mistake. A friend causes a hullabaloo.

SAGITTARIUS
NOV 23-DEC 21
Some people will be switching partners. By not worrying, you can correct a problem. Yield to the facts, no matter what happens.

CAPRICORN
DEC 22-JAN 20
A lenient person will be receptive. A disturbing tempest threatens to interfere with funds. It's wiser not to complain about hostility.

AQUARIUS
JAN 21-FEB 18
A lenient person will be receptive. A disturbing tempest threatens to interfere with funds. It's wiser not to complain about hostility.

PISCES
FEB 19-MARCH 20
An ill friend will discuss his personal agony. Your lack of concern is the point of a story. Keep your side of a bargain.

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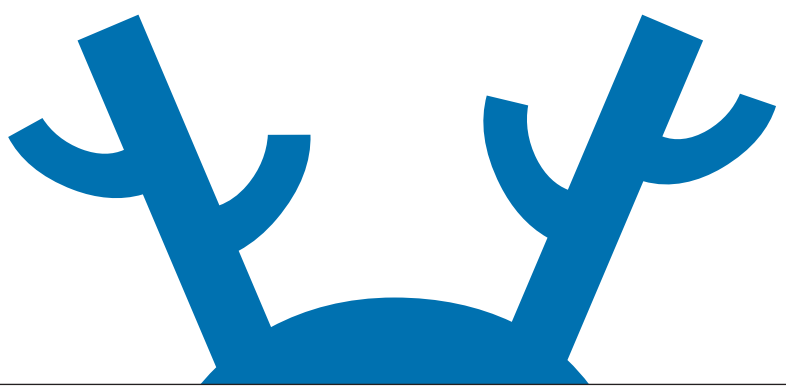

Bell shopping just got better

Also available at these retailers: CAMPBELL RIVER Pure Wireless; COURTENAY Pure Wireless; DUNCAN VI Cellular; MISSION Valley Toys Ltd; WHISTLER WSC Communications; Costco Wholesale; booth the telephone booth; WIRELESS etc...; WIRELESSWAVE

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- Brentwood Town Centre
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- Lougheed Mall
- Marine Way Market
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- Metropolis at Metrotown
- Metropolis at Metrotown kiosk

CHILLIWACK
- Cottonwood Mall

COQUITLAM
- Coquitlam Centre

CRANBROOK
- First Pro Cranbrook

DELTA
- Scottsdale Centre

DAWSON CREEK
- 600 113TH AVE

FORT ST. JOHN
- 8820-100th St.
- Totem Mall

LANGLEY
- Walnut Gate
- Willowbrook Corner
- Willowbrook Mall

MAPLE RIDGE
- Haney Place Mall

NEW WESTMINSTER
- Queensborough Landing

PITT MEADOWS
- Meadowtown Centre

RICHMOND
- 3675 Westminster Hwy
- Aberdeen Centre
- Blundell Centre
- Richmond Centre
- Sands Plaza

SQUAMISH
- 40446 Government Rd.

SURREY
- 10362 King George Hwy
- 13630 72 Ave.
- Guildford Town Centre
- Nordel Crossing
- Panorama Village
- Semiahmoo Shopping Centre

VANCOUVER
- 567 Seymour St.
- 698 West Broadway
- 1008 West Georgia St.
- 1100 Robson St.
- 1588 West Broadway
- 1709 Lonsdale Ave.
- 2154 West 4th
- 2315 West 41st
- Bentall Centre
- Capilano Mall
- Chinatown Plaza
- Lynn Valley
- Oakridge Centre
- Pacific Centre
- Park Royal N.
- Park Royal S.

OKANAGAN

CASTELGAR
- 635 Columbia Ave.

KAMLOOPS
- Aberdeen Mall
- Inside Real Canadian Superstore
- Lansdowne Village

KELOWNA
- 948 McCurdy Rd
- Dilworth Shopping Centre
- Orchard Park Shopping Centre

PENTICTON
- Peachtree Square

PRINCE GEORGE
- Pine Centre

QUESNEL
- 259 Reid St.

VERNON
- 4710 31 St. Unit 106
- Village Green Mall

WILLIAMS LAKE
- Boitanio Mall

VANCOUVER ISLAND

NANAIMO
- Country Club Centre
- Woodgrove Centre

VICTORIA
- Bay Centre
- Hillside Shopping Centre
- Mayfair Shopping Centre
- Westshore Town Centre